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**JOINT FORCES STAFF COLLEGE
JOINT ADVANCED WARFIGHTING SCHOOL**



**SHAPING CHINA'S DEVELOPMENT:
STABLE GROWTH OF AN ASIA-PACIFIC MIGHT**

By

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A paper submitted to the Faculty of the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in partial satisfaction of the requirements of a Master of Science Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy.

The contents of this paper reflect my own personal views and are not necessarily endorsed by the Joint Forces Staff College or the Department of Defense.

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5 April 2007

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ABSTRACT

Over the past 30 years, China has emerged from an isolationist, introverted state into a global economic and political power. This growth has allowed China to expand its military, reaching a level of “near-peer” competitor to the U.S., yet that growth is shrouded in mystery and uncertainty. The U.S. must strive to ascertain China’s future intentions, and develop a strategy that prepares for two possibilities, peaceful engagement with a prosperous China, and response to an aggressive and militant China. The global environment has changed since the end of the Cold War, and even though the United States is still the dominant global superpower, its influence is waning. The Asia-Pacific region, stretching from Japan to Australia to the Indian Ocean to Central Asia, is a vast expanse with a large, diverse population supporting the gamut of social, economic, religious, and governmental constructs. The U.S. is a “Pacific nation,” but must rely upon allies and partners in the Asia-Pacific region to commit to “burden-sharing” to maintain security and stability. Keeping key allies and partners aligned with the U.S. is much more challenging in today’s globalized world, and the complex and interdependent nature of the Asia-Pacific region adds to the difficulty. The U.S. needs to adapt its strategy towards dealing with regional allies, and do so with the combined efforts of all of the elements of national power, promoting the military component needed for security, while also enhancing its efforts in other areas. The U.S. needs to continue, or in certain cases, initiate engaging and cooperative dialogue, even with sometimes troublesome nations such as North Korea. Additionally, doing so in both a bilateral and multilateral construct will bring about the most positive benefits of international diplomacy, and thus further promote security and stability in the Asia-Pacific region.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past 30 years, China has emerged from an isolationist, introverted state into a global economic and political power. This emergence has allowed China to once again become a major influence in the Asia-Pacific region, while simultaneously giving it a very powerful impact around the globe. But China's new-found position should not come without responsibility on its part to foster and support the environment that has allowed its growth. China will face some critical decisions in the near future that will have a long-term impact upon its role in both regional and global relationships. So too will the United States and its allies, along with other nations in the Asia-Pacific region, have to make strategic decisions to promote stability and protect vital national interests. A potential for conflict exists with the convergence of national interests within the region, and the United States needs to predict, prepare for, and strive to prevent these potential clashes of vital interests.

China has been able to expand its military, a natural and expected result of its economic growth and regional influence. However, much of that growth is shrouded in mystery and uncertainty, creating a concern for other nations, both regionally and globally. What is China's intent? Why does it continue to strengthen its military, and what is the threat China sees that encourages that growth? And most importantly, how should the United States and regional and global allies posture to counter China's military growth, yet not provoke China to further accelerate its military growth or conduct preemptive operations based upon a perceived threat?

Opinions and estimates of China's intentions are diverse, and it would be overly simplistic to clearly identify today's China as an adversary or an ally of the U.S., or that

its intentions are peaceful or belligerent. Samuel Huntington states that China, as it strives to redefine its role in world affairs, has set two major goals. The first is to “become the champion of Chinese culture, the core state civilizational magnet toward which all other Chinese communities would orient themselves.”¹ China views itself as the de facto leader of Chinese cultural diasporas around the globe, and is using the self-appointed leadership position to its advantage. The second goal of modern China, according to Huntington, is to “resume its historical position, which it lost in the nineteenth century, as the hegemonic power in East Asia.”²

Huntington’s analysis of China’s emergence can be contrasted to that of Victoria Samson from the Center for Defense Information, who questions the mentality that “any gains by China are directly at the expense of the United States....[T]his attitude is unsubstantiated....[I]t would behoove the United States to drop [it] immediately.”³ But whether friend or foe, “China’s rapid rise as a regional political and economic power with global aspirations is an important element of today’s strategic environment – one that has significant implications for the region and the world.”⁴ Scholars like Huntington, politicians, think tanks such as The Brookings Institute and The Heritage Foundation, and military leaders dedicate substantial effort towards developing and understanding policy and strategy for dealing with China. It is noteworthy that the opinions and estimations of these experts vary significantly, compounding the difficulty of developing a

¹ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1996), 168-169.

² Ibid.

³ Victoria Samson, *Fear of China is Overplayed*, March 2006, produced by the Center for Defense Information, accessed at <http://www.ciaonet.org/wps/cdi009> on 14 September 2006, 1.

⁴ U.S. Department of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress, Military Power of the People’s Republic of China 2006*, I.

comprehensive and logical roadmap to prepare for and interact with a powerful China, one with an ever-growing regional and global influence.

To be fair to all the experts that struggle with predicting China's future, the entire Asia-Pacific region is a very complex, multifaceted environment, and cannot be completely understood or analyzed without years of scholarly study. But China's evolution continues with breakneck speed, and the U.S. government and military do not have the luxury of continual debate and indecision. They must make every effort to ascertain China's future intentions, and from there develop a strategy to accept, engage, and respond to China's global position and actions, or devise methods to direct China's influence in a desirable direction. The U.S. must develop a strategy that prepares for two possibilities, peaceful engagement with a prosperous and successful China, and response to an aggressive and militant China. Furthermore, the U.S. strategy needs to be able to quickly adapt from one possibility to the other, or respond to a scenario that lies somewhere in the middle of these two extremes.

The challenge for the United States is to chart an effective and realistic course to prepare for an uncertain future for China. That uncertainty can emerge in the form of internal instability fostered by internal economic or social upheaval, but the U.S. must also prepare for and face the already existing reality of China's emergence as global power. President Bush, in his recent National Security Strategy, outlined his path with clarity: "We choose to deal with challenges now rather than leaving them for future generations. We seek to shape the world, not merely be shaped by it; to influence events for the better instead of being at their mercy."⁵ His vision is an interactive, engaging

⁵ White House, Office of the President of the United States, *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America*, March 2006, ii.

approach, one that will require the United States to use all of the elements of national power to achieve its objectives.

Undoubtedly, the United States is the preeminent force in today's global environment. In terms of military might, no nation on the globe can match the U.S. in conventional or nuclear capability, and its global military capability has earned it the moniker of being the "sole surviving superpower."⁶ The economic might of the United States also supports the superpower title. With a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of \$12.7 trillion, the U.S. is easily the world's largest economy, roughly six times as large as the Chinese GDP, yet with only one-quarter the population of China.⁷

The United States also benefits from enormous international diplomatic influence. The U.S. has a seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), is a key member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), maintains many bilateral and multilateral alliances and security agreements around the globe, and projects its influence, for good or harm, through leadership in international activities ranging from humanitarian relief operations to the Global War on Terrorism (GWOT).

Thesis Development

In this thesis, I will present the case that stability in the Asia-Pacific region lies in the U.S. ability to foster and create strong international alliances with key nations surrounding China. The U.S. military provides a credible and capable deterrent to Chinese aggression, but the shaping of a regional network of diplomatic alliances, supported by military interaction, will likely encourage China's peaceful rise, while

⁶ Michael E. O'Hanlon, *Defense Policy choices for the Bush Administration*, 2d ed. (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution, 2001), 1

⁷ U.S. Department of State, *Economic Relations Between the United States and China*, 18 April 2006, prepared by the Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs, accessed at <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/64718.htm> on 25 August 2006

providing a credible deterrent to, or response against, Chinese aggression. Fundamental to these alliances and partnerships is the concept of burden sharing. Each nation in the Asia-Pacific region must realize the potential threat that China represents, as well as the opportunities offered by a peaceful and prosperous China. Regional nations, in concert with the U.S., should take an active role in dissuading Chinese aggression, or ideally persuading a peaceful rise. This should be done first through diplomacy, second through military preparation, and third through strategic alliances that will protect the vital interests of China's neighbors and also maintain regional stability. The U.S. has the opportunity to positively shape the Asia-Pacific environment to suit its vital national interests. How it chooses to respond will have a dramatic impact upon the stability of the region.

Thesis Statement: *The United States must create and foster close diplomatic ties, coupled with appropriate military involvement and cooperation, throughout the Asia-Pacific region to provide a credible opposition to Chinese military growth and hence maintain a balance of power in the region.*

Framework

To fully understand and appreciate the emergence of China as a global power would require a multi-volume work, tying together the historical, cultural, economic, and social factors of the entire Asia-Pacific region. To facilitate the efforts of this thesis, I will present a brief summary of China's relationship with the United States, focusing upon the period since World War II. This will lay the groundwork to understand and appreciate the goals and objectives of the People's Republic of China (PRC), in particular the ruling Chinese Communist Party (CCP).

When considering the future regional and global environment, it is necessary to establish a boundary on the timeline for strategic analysis. Attempting to project 50 to 100 years into the future will be a relatively futile effort, one that requires more assumptions than facts, serving to be far less than an educated strategic estimate. Therefore, the timeline for this strategic analysis will be the next 15 to 20 years, and even the far end of that period is a very challenging estimation.

I will first take a brief look at the historical events shaping U.S.-Sino relations since World War II. I will then evaluate China in the 21st Century, and present likely course of action for China's near-term future. Then I will dissect China's military evolution, attempting to discern their military capabilities and potential threats to vital U.S. interests. Next I will highlight the key U.S. alliances and partnerships supporting Asia-Pacific regional stability and present their relative significance and importance for the U.S. Lastly I will suggest some key recommendations that U.S. leaders should consider when developing their strategic plans and objectives for the Asia-Pacific region.

The key alliances and partnerships give the U.S. the influence to achieve their aim of regional and global security with a prosperous and peaceful rise within China. In the 2006 Quadrennial Defense Review (QDR), Secretary Rumsfeld highlighted this critical implication: "The United States will work to ensure that all major and emerging powers are integrated as constructive actors and stakeholders into the international system. A successful hedging strategy requires improving the capacity of partner states and reducing their vulnerabilities."⁸

⁸ U.S. Department of Defense, Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review*, February 2006, 30.

This statement addresses the importance of active engagement, dialogue, and interaction with all of the actors in the Asia-Pacific region. This interaction must necessarily resource all of the elements of national power, and focus on regional actors taking a strong and readied posture, both military and diplomatically, to engage China while assuming an active role in regional security.

Relevance

As stated in the National Security Strategy, “the United States is a Pacific nation, with extensive interests throughout East and Southeast Asia. The region’s stability and prosperity depend on our sustained engagement: maintaining robust partnerships supported by a forward defense posture supporting economic integration through expanded trade and investment and promoting democracy and human rights.”⁹ U.S. interests are pervasive throughout the Asia-Pacific region, and it is vital for the U.S. to maintain stability in the region. The U.S. has many economic partners in the region (including China), maintains a significant military presence with U.S. bases and troops, and relies heavily upon the sea lines of communication (SLOCs) for maritime travel and commerce. Instability, or the emergence of a hegemonic power in the region, could have a decisive negative impact upon U.S. interests, as well as those of U.S. allies.

The region has several flashpoints, which if ignited could quickly create regional or global conflict, even possibly escalating to nuclear exchanges. The issue of Taiwan, also known as the Republic of China (ROC), is the preeminent flashpoint, at least in terms of U.S.-Sino relations. A nuclear North Korea, along with terrorist concerns in Southeast Asia, adds to the list of areas of concern. All of these require active U.S.

⁹ White House, *National Security Strategy*, 40.

diplomacy, at least in part on a bilateral basis due to the nature of the environment, along with military interaction and preparation.

The U.S. has seven bilateral defense alliances across the globe, and five of them are located in the Asia-Pacific region, specifically Australia, Japan, Thailand, South Korea, and the Philippines. Additionally, the U.S. maintains very close ties with Singapore and India. These key alliances indicate the importance of the region to the vital interests and national security of the U.S. These alliances highlight the fact that the U.S. military is heavily engaged with these nations. In the case of Japan and South Korea, the U.S. maintains a significant force structure presence in sovereign nations.

Former Deputy Secretary of State Robert Zoellick (2005-2006) emphasized that the U.S. policy “should focus on urging China to become a responsible global stakeholder.”¹⁰ He states that China has benefited from the global environment that allows investment and trade to and from China, but has also displayed certain trends that question China’s ability to play fairly in the world market.¹¹ Examples such as mercantilism, theft of intellectual property and counterfeiting, and undue influence on the world’s energy supplies are cause for concern about China’s peaceful rise. Zoellick further emphasizes his philosophy by stating “all nations conduct diplomacy to promote their national interests. Responsible stakeholders go further; they recognize that the international system sustains their peaceful prosperity, so they work to sustain that

¹⁰ Thomas J. Christensen, Deputy Assistant Secretary for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, *China’s Role in the World: Is China a Responsible Stakeholder?* remarks before the U.S.-China Economic and Security Review Commission, accessed at <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/69899.htm>, on 9 August 2006.

¹¹ Robert B. Zoellick, Deputy Secretary of State, *Whither China: From Membership to Responsibility?* remarks to the National Committee on the United States and China Relations, presented in New York City on 21 September 2005, accessed at <http://ezproxy6.ndu.edu/login?url=http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?did=1064257211&sid=3&Fmt=3&clientId=3921&RQT=309&VName=PQD> on 20 November 2006, 3.

system.”¹² It is critical to understand that U.S. influence towards that end is only part of the equation, and as cited in the 2006 National Security Strategy, “[China] must act as a responsible stakeholder that fulfills its obligations and works with the United States and others to advance the international system that has enabled its success.”¹³ Part of the equation for peace and stability in the region relies upon China’s actions, and in this capacity “U.S. policy can play a role, for good or ill, in shaping the decisions China makes about its future.”¹⁴

Today’s security environment is more volatile and uncertain than during the Cold War, and the terrorist attacks on the U.S. on September 11th, 2001, highlight the necessity to be proactive in shaping that security environment. Although the events of September 11th changed the U.S. perspective on peace and security within the homeland, the attacks were not of a nature that truly threatened the survival of the nation. Short of a terrorist faction obtaining a weapon of mass destruction (WMD), or a rogue nation-state, such as North Korea, preemptively launching a nuclear attack on the U.S., the most likely and formidable long-term threat is the rise of a peer competitor with the capability and intent to directly challenge U.S. interests and security. With U.S. forces heavily tasked around the globe waging the GWOT, predominantly in Iraq and Afghanistan, the U.S. must pursue other means of accomplishing its objectives outside of strict military preparations. In fact, that is the preferred option. This concept reinforces the notion that key alliances, coupled with military interaction, can enable other nations in the Asia-Pacific region to share the burden of security.

¹² Ibid., 3

¹³ White House, *National Security Strategy*, 41.

¹⁴ Center for Strategic and International Studies, and the Institute for International Economics, *China: The Balance Sheet* (New York: PublicAffairs, 2006), 155.

Any discussion on Asia-Pacific situations will inevitably include considerations regarding China, for it is virtually impossible to talk about the region without evaluating China's role. It is a major regional power, with the ability to influence, persuade, and potentially dominate other nations and affect vital U.S. interests. Whether China continues down a reformative path and becomes a "responsible stakeholder," or chooses an alternate avenue for their country's future, is uncertain, but it is necessary for the U.S. to take a proactive and engaged role across the region to shape China's development. President Bush laid the foundation for his plan in his recent NSS where he wrote "Our strategy seeks to encourage China to make the right strategic choices for its people, while we hedge against other possibilities."¹⁵ This hedging strategy must not be a unilateral action, but instead requires action and commitment by other regional nations to take a responsible role in regional security. The challenge is for the U.S. to develop a strategy that convinces and assures other nations to do just that.

¹⁵ White House, *National Security Strategy*, 42.

CHAPTER 1: CHINA, 1945 TO THE PRESENT

“China’s rise as a global economic and political power is one of the transformative events of our time and one of the most important challenges facing U.S. foreign and economic policy now and for many years to come.”¹⁶

China is a nation of vast strategic importance to the U.S., due largely to its economic growth in the past thirty years, its ability to influence in the Asia-Pacific region, and its proximity to areas of vital interest to the U.S. China’s position even gives it global influence, requiring the U.S. to thoroughly consider the impact its strategy for China may have on long-term stability both regionally and globally. The objective of this chapter is to present an evolutionary picture of U.S.-Sino relations since World War II, describe how the global environment influenced U.S. strategic decisions, and discuss how actions and decisions made following World War II link to strategic issues impacting today’s U.S.-Sino relations. Specifically, the U.S.’s decision to focus primarily on Europe after World War II, misguided policy statements by national leaders, and efforts to leverage China during the Cold War all had unintended implications on U.S. strategy in East Asia. It is important to gain an understanding of past decisions, some of which were strategic mistakes, to prevent their reoccurrence, and to simultaneously gain an appreciation for the strategic importance of the Asia-Pacific region.

The Aftermath of World War II

The global environment in the late 1940s was a very difficult period for the U.S. Less than four years after convincing victories in both European and Pacific theaters, the world had turned into a morass of difficult situations, most working against the best interests of the U.S. In 1947, a communist insurgency was entrenched in northern

¹⁶ Center for Strategic and International Studies, *China: The Balance Sheet*, ix.

Greece, the acknowledged birthplace of modern democracy. Like Greece, Turkey was menaced by Soviet influence, and both countries required U.S. economic aid to support their floundering governments and overcome communist subversion. The U.S. response, the Greek-Turkish aid program, formed the basis of the Truman Doctrine and was a logical enterprise based upon the emerging U.S. policy of opposing Soviet expansionism.¹⁷ Nearly simultaneously, the U.S. initiated the Marshall Plan, providing “massive economic aid to Europe,” which was exhausted fiscally by the requirements of World War II.¹⁸

The world, particularly Europe, was awash with Soviet expansionism. The 1949 Soviet blockade of Berlin clearly illuminated their expansionist intentions and desire to dominate Eastern Europe. A Communist coup succeeded in Czechoslovakia, increasing Stalin’s buffer zone between the Soviet Union and Western Europe. The U.S. and its allies recognized the imposing threat of a large Soviet Army in Eastern Europe, and in 1949 they formed the North Atlantic Treaty Organization as a self-defense organization for the protection of Western Europe.¹⁹ Although fashioned somewhat unintentionally, the U.S. developed a “containment” strategy to prevent communist expansion, a concept that emerged from George Kennan’s “Mr. X Article.”²⁰

¹⁷ The Truman Doctrine emerged following a joint session of Congress on March 12, 1947. President Truman outlined his plan for economic aid and military training/advisors to “support free peoples who are resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or outside pressures.” It provided \$400,000,000 in aid for Greece and Turkey for the period ending June 30, 1948.

Cynthia A. Watson, *U.S. National Security: A Reference Handbook* (Santa Barbara, ABC-CLIO, Inc., 2002), 136-141.

¹⁸ Robert J. Donovan, *The Presidency of Harry S. Truman 1945-1948*, First Edition (New York, W.W. Norton & Company Inc., 1977), 280.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 159.

²⁰ “The Sources of Soviet Conduct” published in *Foreign Affairs* in July 1947, was written by Mr. Kennan under the pseudonym Mr. X. This article was the first mention of the term “containment,” which eventually grew into the basis for U.S.-Soviet relations for the duration of the Cold War. Ironically, he later argued that this policy was focused too narrowly on U.S.-Soviet relations, and not applied globally. *Ibid.*, 144.

“Who Lost China?”

Despite the success of both the Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan in Europe, the U.S. did not similarly apply those models to counter a growing communist threat in China. Civil war had dominated China since the 1920s, with opposition forces joining efforts to fight the Japanese in the late 1930s through the end of World War II. Once the war ended, the Nationalists, led by Chiang Kai-shek, and the Communists, led by Mao Tse-Tung, renewed their direct conflict with each other. Debate raged throughout the U.S. Government and military as to the type and extent of aid the U.S. should provide to the Nationalists, or whether any aid was justified and would be of value. Retired General George C. Marshall, Secretary of State from 1947 to 1949, noted, “Effective resistance to the Communists in China would require the U.S. to take over the national government and administer its economic, military, and governmental affairs. It would be impossible to estimate final costs of a course of action of this magnitude.”²¹ Based purely upon economic and pragmatic considerations, successful support of the Nationalists was considered untenable. Furthermore, it was considered likely in the U.S. that strong support of the Nationalist Government would incite the Soviet Union to offer comparable, or even greater, assistance to the Communists.

Interestingly, many in the U.S. Government recommended supporting the Communists, since they were much more capable militarily, and appeared far less corrupt than the Nationalists. The China Hands Group was a leader of this effort, arguing from a pragmatic standpoint.²² Its members suggested support of the Communists was in the

²¹ Forest C. Pogue, *George C. Marshall: Statesman 1945-1949* (New York, Penguin Books, 1987), 276.

²² “China Hands” was a group consisting mostly of Foreign Service Officers who had vast experience working in China. Their corporate knowledge and understanding of the nature of the conflict and environment in China formed the basis of the group’s recommendation for support of the Communists.

best interests of the U.S., because Washington could work with an established Communist Government once it took power, which they predicted to be likely. These efforts to promote support to the Communists formed the foundation of Senator Joseph McCarthy's sensationalized charges of Communist subversion levied against prominent figures in the U.S. government, including General Marshall. Regardless of any practicality behind U.S. support of the Communists, it was politically intolerable, both domestically and globally.

The long-term U.S. strategy envisioned China becoming a major ally in the Asia-Pacific region, capable of providing stability and a hedge against Soviet expansion. The U.S., under the "leadership of Byrnes [Secretary of State, 1945-1947], Acheson [Under Secretary of State, 1945-1949], Marshall, and John Carter Vincent [U.S. Department of State] decided to choose mediation and restraint in China's Civil War."²³ Fundamental to that emergence was "their [U.S.] hopes for a strong, united, and independent China, and this [mediation and restraint] was the only way to achieve unity."²⁴ In essence, the U.S. needed China to emerge from its civil war as an ally, but realized that China must seek that resolution without the U.S. playing a significant role.

A National Security Council report provided the following recommendation from the State Department, and Army, Navy, and Air Force members of the NSC staff:

²³ Philip Zelikow, Counselor of the Department, Prepared Remarks for State Department Historian's Conference on U.S.-China History: Ending the Great Aberration," September 25, 2006, accessed at <http://www.state.gov/s/c/rls/rm/73373.htm> on 24 October 2006, 5.

²⁴ Ibid., 5.

The United States should furnish only limited economic assistance to the National Government of China on a scale designed to (a) retard economic [and military] deterioration, and (b) provide that Government with an opportunity to acquire limited military supplies with its own resources, [and] stabilize its internal political and military situation. The United States assistance program in China should be regarded as subordinate to the efforts to stabilize conditions in areas of more strategic importance.²⁵

The final comment in the excerpt above is a strong indictment that U.S. leadership did not view China, or the Asia-Pacific region, as possessing strategic importance comparable to Europe, a shortsighted error that casts its shadow into the 21st century.

The U.S. vision of China as an ally against Soviet expansionism never became a reality. The decision not to intervene with significant assistance at least partly resulted in Chiang Kai-Shek being forced to flee with his Nationalist Government to the island of Formosa, present day Taiwan, where he established the Republic of China (ROC). The U.S. strategy of mediation did not stop the Communists, led by Mao Tse-tung, from taking control of mainland China. Mao Tse-tung established the People's Republic of China (PRC) and turned towards Stalin and the Soviet Union as an ally. Quite unexpectedly and while the U.S. was focused mainly on Europe to the detriment of Asia, its strategic missteps further worsened the global environment. Harry Yarger articulated this result with a strategy premise: any strategy creates a security dilemma for the strategist and other actors.²⁶ While unlikely direct U.S. military support to the Nationalists would have changed the outcome of China's civil war, within the realm of

²⁵ United States National Security Council Report, *NSC 6, Note by the Executive Secretary to the National Security Council on The Position of the United States Regarding Short-Term Assistance to China*, March 26, 1948, declassified on 7 April 1973. Accessed from <http://nsarchive.chadwyck.com/cat/displayItem.do?queryType=cat&&ResultsID=10E8FE1943D6&ItemNumber=2> on 15 October 2006, 1.

²⁶ Harry Y. Yarger, *Strategic Theory for the 21st Century: The Little Book on Big Strategy*, February 2006, available at <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil>, 8.

U.S. political circles the question emerged of “who lost China?” The consequences of that mediation strategy were felt for the rest of the 20th century and are still echoing across the region today.

With a Communist victory in China, a “great aberration,” or rupture in U.S.-Sino relations, began that lasted for about twenty years until President Nixon began to foster a return to “normalization.”²⁷ Ironically, during the creation of the U.N. Charter in 1945, the U.S. had been the sole nation that had insisted on preserving a seat for China on the UNSC.²⁸ In the early 1940s, Franklin Roosevelt recognized the strategic importance of China, but either did not foresee, or hoped he could prevent, a communist China following World War II. Unfortunately, Roosevelt did not live to see that result. Eventually the Communist PRC occupied the China seat on the UNSC,²⁹ which proved to have a profound and often troubling effect for U.S. efforts in the U.N.

The Unintended Consequences of a Few Words

Dean Acheson, in an informal and unintended fashion, articulated the U.S. strategy for East Asia and in doing so sent a schizophrenic message to the region. In early 1950, Acheson, in what became known as his perimeter speech, virtually wrote off U.S. security interests in Korea, saying “a new day has dawned in Asia. It is a day in which the Asian peoples are on their own.”³⁰ Within six months, North Korean communists invaded South Korea, confidently believing that the U.S. would not intervene in internal Korean issues. Bolstered by the fears of global communism and

²⁷ Zelikow, *Ending the Great Aberration*, 3.

²⁸ *Ibid.*, 5.

²⁹ Prior to October 1971, the China seat on the UNSC was held by the Nationalist Republic of China (ROC), with its capital in Taiwan. The UN General Assembly, with GA resolution 2758, voted to give sole representation of China in the UN to the People’s Republic of China (PRC).

³⁰ Watson, *U.S. National Security: A Reference Handbook*, 161.

recalling the outcome of China's civil war, the U.S. responded with military force to the invasion. China provided support and direct military assistance to North Korea. Mao Tse-tung believed "the rampant reactionary forces headed by the United States would step up their offensive against the world 'revolutionary front,' ... and Communist China might very well be the next target of the reactionary assault."³¹ Both the U.S. and China had real concerns about security, and entered the war determined to maintain credibility as well as to establish a precedent about their intentions to combat either communist or "imperialist" expansion. China's support of North Korea was a major factor in the eventual division of the Korean Peninsula at the 38th parallel, a dilemma that might not exist today had the U.S. been able to prevent Communist China's emergence following World War II.

Leveraging Strategy Leads to Normalization

President Nixon, who had a certain fondness for the Asia-Pacific Region, saw an opportunity to use China's growing isolation from the Soviet Union as an opportunity for leverage. The early years of the Cold War placed China squarely on the side of the Communist bloc led by the Soviet Union. But in the late 1960s, U.S.-Sino bilateral relations began to improve as China grew apart from the Marxist-Leninist form of socialism, and relations between China and the Soviet Union deteriorated. Leaders in both Washington and Beijing understood that talking is better than fighting, and it is much more difficult to fire shots while engaged in diplomatic negotiations. The lessons learned through the tough period of Vietnam were being applied to U.S.-Sino relations.

³¹ Michael M. Sheng, "China's Decision to Enter the Korean War, Reappraisal and New Documentation," *Korea and World Affairs*, Vol. XIX, No. 2, summer 1995, accessed from <http://www.kimsoft.com/korea/cn-korea.htm> on 1 November 2006.

Nixon visited China in 1972, meeting with Chairman Mao Tse-Tung and Foreign Minister Zhou Enlai. This was the first step towards a gradual transition in U.S. strategy, and their talks resulted in the Shanghai Communiqué of 1972 as a meeting summary.³² They agreed that “progress toward the normalization of relations between China and the United States is in the interests of all countries.”³³ Both parties presented their viewpoints on the issue of Taiwan. The U.S. acknowledged that “all Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China and that Taiwan is part of China, and reaffirms its interest in a peaceful settlement of the Taiwan question by the Chinese themselves.”³⁴

Under President Carter in 1979, the U.S. and China began official diplomatic relations and published a second Communiqué in conjunction with Vice Premier Deng Xiaoping’s visit to Washington D.C. With this Communiqué, the U.S. recognized the Government of the PRC as the sole legal government of China, and simultaneously terminated official relations with the ROC on Taiwan.³⁵ In response to President Carter’s actions, Congress enacted the Taiwan Relations Act (TRA), guaranteeing certain defense commitments to the people of Taiwan.³⁶ Congress was concerned that President Carter had left Taiwan vulnerable to invasion or coercion by China, who considered Taiwan a secessionist province of China and advocated reunification of the island with the mainland, under PRC control. The U.S. and China published a third Communiqué in 1982, reaffirming the concepts of the previous two, and articulating opposing positions

³² Watson, *U.S. National Security: A Reference Handbook*, 176-180.

³³ *Ibid.*, 179.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, 180.

³⁵ *Joint Communiqué on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations, 1 January 1979*, accessed from <http://www.taiwandocuments.org/communique02.htm> on 28 October 2006.

³⁶ United States Congress, *Taiwan Relations Act, Legislative History of Public Law 96-8, 1979*. accessed from <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/printdoc> on 20 Sep 2006.

on U.S. arms sales to Taiwan. It noted “the United States Government states that it does not seek to carry out a long-term policy of arms sales to Taiwan.”³⁷ This U.S. philosophy would not hold, and in response to Chinese military buildup, the U.S. would initiate further arms sales programs to Taiwan.

A Muddled U.S. Strategy

Today the status of Taiwan is still the most volatile issue between the U.S. and China, and the one most likely to lead to a military confrontation involving all three entities. This is evidenced by the large military buildup of the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) across the Taiwan Strait, along with U.S. offers to sell Taiwan over \$18 billion in U.S. equipment as a counter to PLA buildup.³⁸ In 2001 President Bush outlined his policy on the Taiwan issue with clarity stating, “[We will do] whatever it takes to help Taiwan defend herself.”³⁹ This statement of policy was a divergence from previous U.S. and White House policy of strategic ambiguity and in many ways was contrary to the three communiqués between Beijing and Washington and also the “one-China” policy.⁴⁰

President Bush has come to realize, much like President Nixon did in the 1970s, that engagement with China is a necessary part of a comprehensive strategy for the Asia-Pacific region. In fact, his 2006 National Security Strategy (NSS) devotes over two pages to East Asia, compared to a half-page for the Middle East despite the many

³⁷ *Joint Communiqué of the United States of America and the People’s Republic of China, August 17, 1982.* Available at <http://usinfo.state.gov/utis/printpage.html>, accessed 31 October 2006.

³⁸ “Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment – China and Northeast Asia, Defence Budget, Taiwan,” date posted 1 Aug 2006, accessed from <http://www8.janes.com/Search/printfriendlyview>, on 20 September 2006.

³⁹ George W. Bush, interview for ABC Television, 25 April 2001, accessed from <http://archives.cnn.com/2001/ALLPOLITICS/04/24/bush.taiwan.abc/index.html> on 5 November 2006.

⁴⁰ The “One China” policy articulates that the U.S. does not challenge that the Chinese on either side of the Taiwan Strait maintain there is but one China, and that Taiwan is part of China. Eventual determination of the government is an internal affair for the Chinese to resolve, but U.S. policy also states that Beijing should not attempt to coerce Taiwan to unify under Beijing (primarily with force), and that Taiwan should not take actions to unilaterally alter Taiwan’s status (e.g. declare independence or alter their Constitution).

challenges in that region.⁴¹ With regards to China specifically, his “strategy seeks to encourage China to make the right strategic choices for its people, while we hedge against other possibilities.”⁴²

With a shift in strategic communication efforts since the early months of his Presidency, and the seemingly unconditional pledge to defend Taiwan, “the Bush administration [has come to] believe that the United States needs China’s help on an array of important issues.”⁴³ Topping this list is the influence China brings to the Six-Party Talks and attempts to control North Korea’s nuclear weapons program. China exerts strong influence over North Korea, and is the nation most capable of convincing North Korea to abstain from further nuclear tests and to return to the Six-Party Talks. President Bush knows that he needs China’s assistance in this endeavor, and his policy in the past few years has softened regarding Taiwan. In essence, as compensation for China’s support and assistance on matters of greater vital interests to the U.S, President Bush’s policy, as of 2004, is to maintain the status quo while supporting the obligations of the TRA.⁴⁴ The TRA mandate is quite different from the strong words of “whatever it takes” that President Bush had articulated previously, only obligating the U.S. to “assist Taiwan in maintaining its self-defense capability and retain the [U.S.] capacity to resist any use of force against Taiwan.”⁴⁵

President Bush’s muddled message is an unfortunate but unavoidable outcome of the United States’ complex relationship between China and Taiwan. It is also a result of

⁴¹ White House, *National Security Strategy*, 38-42.

⁴² *Ibid.*, 42.

⁴³ Ted Galen Carpenter, *President Bush’s Muddled Policy on Taiwan*, March 15, 2004, Cato Institute, Cato Foreign Policy Briefing, accessed at <http://www.cato.org/pubs/fpbriefts/fpb82.pdf> on 1 November 2006, 4.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 4.

⁴⁵ Admiral William J. Fallon, U.S. Navy, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on U.S. Pacific Command Posture, 7 March 2006, accessed from <https://www.pacom.mil> on 21 November 2006, 18.

failing to anticipate the consequences of actions (and words), much like the U.S. in the late 1940s failed to realize the strategic implications of a Communist China and take action accordingly.

President Bush has devoted considerable efforts towards developing a strategy for China, and Asia as a whole, in the 21st Century. The two pillars of his NSS are “promoting freedom, justice, and human dignity; and leading a growing community of democracies.”⁴⁶ These two themes are repeated throughout the document, defining the strategy for his administration, and indicating his desire to spread democracy throughout the globe. With regards to China specifically, his “strategy seeks to encourage China to make the right strategic choices for its people, while we hedge against other possibilities.”⁴⁷ It is unlikely that China will transition to democracy in the near future, and the lessons in Iraq indicate clearly that democracy can not be imposed upon another nation, but must be grown from within. The U.S. must allow for China to make a transition towards democracy of its own evolution, and at best continue to apply soft power to shape and influence towards that end.

The Asia-Pacific region is very complex, and the interdependency of the nations in the region further challenges the environment. The U.S. strategy towards stability in the region mandates building bilateral and multilateral alliances and partnerships. In a manner similar to Nixon’s efforts to influence the Soviet Union through “normalization” with China, the U.S. will be able to influence and shape the region’s development, through similar “normalizing” relationships with Asia-Pacific nations, including China.

⁴⁶ Ibid., ii.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 42.

The U.S. strategy of engagement with China has been a “winding road” since the end of World War II. It has evolved from passive support of the Nationalists, to indirect conflict in the Korean War, to the “great aberration,” to “normalization,” to “whatever it takes,” and most recently to maintaining the status quo in the Taiwan Straits. These strategic initiatives have emerged with the best of intentions, but in hindsight many appear to have lacked thorough analysis of potential outcomes and their consequences. It is critical that the U.S. leadership carefully evaluate the entire region, recall and reflect upon the misjudgments and mistakes of the past sixty years, and make the right strategic choices.

CHAPTER 2: WHAT DOES CHINA LOOK LIKE TODAY?

“China now seeks to reassert its historical prominence.”⁴⁸

- Dr. Marvin C. Ott

In order to understand and estimate China's future, it is important to understand the nature of China today. What is the focus and objective of the ruling CCP? What motivates the population? What has encouraged and facilitated the economic growth of the past twenty-five years, and is that growth sustainable? How does China view the world outside its borders, and how does it plan to interact, engage, and influence the region and beyond? In this chapter I will look at China with an internal focus, and bring forth the key issues facing China domestically. Then I will present the likely future course for China on both a regional and global scale. It is important to understand and keep in mind that there is a linkage between internal and external issues, and that they do have an impact upon each other.

China's Internal Development

Despite its awe-inspiring economic growth and progress, a set of self-destructive dynamics is weakening China's most vital political institutions – the state and the ruling party. Lagging behind the country's rapid economic modernization, China's closed political system is increasingly becoming an anachronism. At present, it is incapable of facilitating the representation of China's complex and diverse social interests or mediating the conflict between an authoritarian state and a liberalizing society.⁴⁹

Minxin Pei, in writing his 2006 book quoted above, painted a picture of China in a “trapped transition,” where economic development has encouraged social growth and enlightenment, and subsequently both have far outpaced needed political/governmental

⁴⁸ Marvin C. Ott, “Southeast Asian Security Challenges: America's Response?,” *Strategic Forum*, no. 222 (October 2006), Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University.

⁴⁹ Minxin Pei, *China's Trapped Transition: The Limits of Developmental Autocracy* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 206.

reforms. This conflict between the social liberalization of the Chinese populace and the autocracy of the ruling CCP could potentially stall the economic advancement of China. The outcome of that stalled advancement could be disastrous, leading to internal strife and civil unrest, and a domino effect with a massive economic impact that would reach around the globe.

The CCP has been reluctant to change its overall governing structure despite the social enlightenment that naturally comes with economic progress. Instead the CCP has used all means to maintain their hold on power. In November 2002, Li Rui, Mao Tse-Tung's former secretary and a liberal party member of the CCP, stated "Chinese and foreign histories prove that autocracy is the source of political turmoil. As the collapse of the Soviet Union shows, the root cause is autocracy. Modernization is possible only through democratization. This is the trend in the world in the twentieth century...Those who follow this trend will thrive; those who fight against this trend will perish."⁵⁰

The Government is in Charge

Despite the economic advancements of China since Deng Xiaoping's initiatives beginning in the late 1970s, the ruling CCP's primary focus has been upon its survival and control of autocratic power. The CCP's governmental model is still based upon a form of Leninism, where the CCP essentially controls the resources of the country. That desire to control and resist political reform has "undermined the regime's ability to maintain effective governance and to address three critical challenges; rampant official corruption, erosion of state capacity, and growing imbalances in society and polity."⁵¹

⁵⁰ Ibid., 4.

⁵¹ Ibid., 12-16.

“Corruption remains a systemic and growing problem throughout the Party apparatus, especially among officials at the provincial level and below, presenting a challenge to regime legitimacy.”⁵² The CCP leadership in Beijing is aware of the problems that rampant corruption can present, and recently has taken strong actions to punish corrupt officials. In September 2006, President Hu fired Chen Liangyu, the CCP’s Secretary in Shanghai, as part of a country-wide investigation and crackdown.⁵³ Although this is portrayed by President Hu as an attempt to create a “harmonious society,” it also sends a message to his countrymen and party members about his willingness to assert power and maintain centralized control in Beijing. “More troubling still is the possibility that corruption is so deeply engrained and lucrative that occasional enforcement campaigns are not sufficient to build the necessary ‘ethics infrastructure,’ but rather purely political efforts to portray the party as ‘doing something.’”⁵⁴ Corruption has become such a fundamental part of Chinese society that any CCP efforts to control it are merely “window dressing” and are unlikely to have any substantive effect other than to showcase CCP power and influence.

Furthermore, when one looks closer, it is easy to see that corruption scandals are an indicator of Beijing’s inability to effectively govern and provide services and functions for its country. Social unrest occurs frequently in both urban and rural parts of China, and is almost always ignited by a segment of the population that has a justifiable grievance against the government or a government-sponsored industry.

⁵² Office of the Secretary of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress, Military Power of the People’s Republic of China 2006*, 8.

⁵³ Strategic Forecasting Inc., Global Intelligence Brief, *China: Hu Speaks Loudly with Anti-Corruption Moves*, accessed at http://www.stratfor.com/products/premium/read_article.php?id=276341 on 27 September 2006.

⁵⁴ Center for Strategic and International Studies, *China: The Balance Sheet*, 44-45.

In urban areas, sources of unrest include unfair working conditions in enterprises; lack of social security for laid-off workers; unpaid pensions for retired workers of state-owned enterprises; low and unpaid wages for migrant workers; insufficient compensation for resettled urban residents; and ethnic tensions. In rural areas, where the frequency and scale of incidents are greater, unrest arises largely from shady land confiscation, fees, tolls and other local tax burdens, environmental degradation, and official corruption.⁵⁵

Social imbalance in China manifests itself primarily in terms of money or wealth distribution, and a corresponding inequality in standards of living. The coastal areas of China have a preponderance of the industry and finance, and hence a majority of the country's GDP is produced along the coast, and not distributed to the impoverished interior of China. Many inhabitants of the inland provinces still live in a state of abject poverty, and China now has a "floating population" – millions of Chinese peasants that have abandoned the countryside to migrate towards urban areas. This migration does allow for some redistribution of money back to rural areas as remittance while providing a source of cheap labor, but also puts a strain on already overpopulated urban areas.⁵⁶

Despite these three challenges of corruption, insufficient governance, and social imbalance, Pei predicts the CCP will maintain its grip on power. The CCP will make reforms per se, but they will not be in the best interests of advancing China's growth. Pei also comments "Reforms are primarily intended to improve the prospects of CCP rule, not undermine it."⁵⁷ But without needed political reforms to support the economic advances of the past twenty-five years, China will enter a period of stagnation. In his

⁵⁵ Ibid., 41.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 45-46.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 71.

view, China has missed an opportunity to capitalize and “make a break from its authoritarian past, and [will pay] a heavy price for it.”⁵⁸

Ultimately, conditions internal to China will directly impact its ability to achieve its long-term regional and global strategy. This will be determined by the ability of the CCP and its government to reform and advance China not just economically and socially, but politically as well. The challenge for the United States and the international community is to prepare for the uncertainty of China’s future. Regional and global actors must work collaboratively to prepare for that spectrum, ranging from overt Chinese aggression (e.g. Taiwan conflict), to a sudden regime collapse driven by internal pressure, to stagnation in China’s development, to the unlikely but desirable gradual democratization coupled with social improvements and economic advancement.

China’s Regional and Global Plan

*The socialist system will eventually replace the capitalist system; this is an objective law independent of man’s will.*⁵⁹

– Chairman Mao Tse Tung

China currently supports a narrowly conceived goal of safeguarding its internal stability while growing its economic base and military strength. This first goal serves to partially obscure China’s long-term “global, unlimited, and broadly conceived” goal to become a regional hegemon and a global power.⁶⁰ The international community must realize and accept this condition of the environment when analyzing China and developing strategies for the Asia-Pacific region. This logical conclusion can be based upon one undeniable fact: China continues to modernize its military at an alarming rate,

⁵⁸ Minxin Pei, *China’s Trapped Transition*, 214.

⁵⁹ Chairman Mao Tse Tung, Quotations from Chairman Mao Tse-Tung. (no publishing information available).

⁶⁰ Steven Mosher, *Does the PRC have a Grand Strategy of Hegemony?*, accessed at <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/congress/mos021406.pdf> on 18 December 2006.

yet does so with great secrecy surrounding its intentions and the true nature of its defense expenditures.

Not surprisingly, Chinese aspirations of hegemony will not be found anywhere in public statements by the leaders of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP). Instead China strongly and repeatedly denies it is pursuing hegemony, as evidenced by a recent Chinese Defense White Paper:

It is an inevitable choice based on the present world development trend that China persists unswervingly in taking the road of peaceful development. As early as in 1974, when China resumed its membership in the United Nations, Deng Xiaoping proclaimed to the world that China would never seek hegemony. Since the policies of reform and opening-up were introduced, China, keeping in view the changes in the international situation, has upheld the important strategic judgment that peace and development are the theme of the present times, and declared on many occasions that China did not seek hegemony in the past, nor does it now, and will not do so in the future when it gets stronger. China's development will never pose a threat to anyone.⁶¹

It is interesting to note that myriad White Papers published by China serve primarily as China's defense against accusations and assertions levied by the international community. As one poignant example, Beijing has recently published two White Papers about human rights. The first highlights improvements and accomplishments with regards to human rights in China, stating "The Chinese government pays special attention to respecting and safeguarding human rights... [and] to help the international community toward a better understanding of the human rights situation in China, we hereby present an overview of the developments in the field of

⁶¹ Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, *White Paper on China's Peaceful Development Road*, 12 December 2005, accessed at <http://www.china.org.cn/english/features/book/152684.htm> on 29 December 2006.

human rights in China in 2004.”⁶² The other paper denigrates the United States, claiming vast injustices in its judicial system, torture and forced confessions, horrific social and economic inequalities, and rampant racial discrimination and violence. Most interestingly it claims “the United States ranks first in the world in wantonly infringing upon the sovereignty of, and human rights in, other countries.”⁶³ These two papers are national propaganda, full of praise and admiration for the accomplishments of the Chinese Government, and with nothing but accusations and condemnations leveled at the United States. They do serve some marginal utility, in that they inform the international community of China’s perception and opinion of the U.S. The suspicion and questionable integrity of these two White Papers bring into doubt whether the international community can trust any of the published White Papers China uses to propagandize its messages, particularly when the peace and stability of the Asia-Pacific region are at stake.

Furthermore, the indications and evidence to support an assertion of China’s hegemonic aspirations are all too visible. One need only look deeper at the Chinese history, and pair that history up with China’s subtle, and sometimes overt, actions today to easily construct a scenario of Chinese dominance, first in the Asia-Pacific Region, and then outward from there. Throughout the recorded history of East Asia, China has exerted a natural primacy, which, until the era of Western imperialism dominated the region, gave China a dominant influence.

⁶² Information Office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, *White Paper on China’s Progress in Human Rights in 2004*, April 2005, accessed at <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20050418/index.htm> on 29 December 2006.

⁶³ Information Office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China, *White Paper on Human Rights Records of the United States in 2001*, March 11 2002, accessed at <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20020313/index.htm> on 29 December 2006.

Timing

The phrase “long-term” has a different meaning in China than in the U.S. The Chinese vision is an evolution that will take decades, if not a century or greater to accomplish. They learned a valuable lesson from the collapse of the Soviet Union, and they have no desire to compete in an arms race with the United States. They are much more willing to wait patiently, advance slowly, present every manner of peaceful intentions, and unnoticeably advance their hegemonic interests.

China has two objectives in the short-term of the next one or two decades. First is to once and for all rid itself of the period of humiliation it faced from the mid-nineteenth century until the end of World War II. The second is to reduce or eliminate altogether the dominant U.S. influence from the Asia-Pacific region, enabling China to assume the role of regional leadership and influence.

During the one hundred years from the 1840s to the conclusion of WWII, imperialist expansion divided and decimated China. The Sino-Japanese wars inflicted years of Japanese occupation and denigration upon the Chinese people. The Opium War of 1840, which China lost, opened the doors to western expansion and imperialist colonization, and the important city of Hong Kong became a British Colony. In 1898, Britain executed a 99-year lease of the New Territories, expanding the size of the Hong Kong colony. In 1911, a revolutionary uprising led to the abdication of the last Qing Monarch, and by 1916 China entered the era of the “warlords” epitomized by a coalition of competing provincial military leaders. In the 1930s and 1940s Japanese occupation and expansion throughout China challenged a divided nation to collaborate in their efforts to repel the Japanese. Sixty years later, the autocratic Chinese government has begun to

espouse Chinese nationalism as a unifying force, and aims to restore China to its once glorious position as the dominant nation in East Asia.

With regards to the second “short-term” objective, it is important to understand China’s perception of the region, or at least its justification for its actions. China feels threatened by the U.S., and its position of significance and influence in the region. When China looks around at countries bordering their nation, it sees an overwhelming U.S. presence, a host of U.S. alliances and partnerships, and overt evidence of U.S. interest and involvement. “Chinese scholars, writing with official sanction, characterize U.S. strategic intentions toward China as ‘encirclement’ and ‘strangulation.’”⁶⁴ Perception is reality in the eyes of the Chinese leadership, and they perceive, or at least want to perceive, the U.S. as implementing a containment strategy.

Unfortunately the principle of perception is reality also holds true for the U.S. leadership, and its perception of Chinese intent is shrouded in uncertainty and mystery. In March 2006, China announced a defense budget increase of 14.7 percent for the next year, amounting to over \$35 billion dollars, or 1.5% of the Chinese GDP.⁶⁵ This trend of double-digit increases in defense spending by the Chinese has been occurring for the last decade, but yet the Chinese continue to advocate their peaceful development. In its 2004 Defense White Paper, China identifies “the main tasks of China's national defense are to step up modernization of its national defense and its armed forces, to safeguard national security and unity, and to ensure the smooth process of building a moderately prosperous society in an all-round way.” There is a disconnect between what China presents in its White Paper, and the contrary evidence of their rapid yet secretive military growth. This

⁶⁴ Ott, “Southeast Asian Security Challenges: America’s Response?,”.

⁶⁵ U.S. Department of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress, Military Power of the People’s Republic of China 2006*, 7.

forces the U.S. and the nations of the region to prepare for China as a growing military threat.

The next chapter will outline in detail China's military modernization, and compare and contrast those emerging capabilities against the United States. This will aid in discerning that China's military modernization objectives are not focused on purely domestic security issues, but are focused on the ability to project power well beyond its borders. It is this disturbing pattern that gives the international community cause for concern.

Putting it all Together

China faces some significant domestic issues, and the reluctance of the national leaders to focus on the needs of the populace at the expense of their own objectives is serving to derail the opportunities economic success can bring. Chinese secrecy and propaganda methods combine to cause the international community to distrust the true motivations behind the Chinese modernization. The PRC's strategic intentions are unclear, and with that uncertainty comes mistrust, requiring regional and global actors to prepare for a "worst-case" situation while hoping for the best.

CHAPTER 3: IS CHINA A MILITARY THREAT?

As already mentioned several times in this paper, China has been steadily growing its military over the past ten years. Is this simply a natural and expected occurrence of a country with a growing economic base, or is it motivated by a desire for regional and global expansion in the near or long-term future? Does that growth make China a military near-peer competitor to the U.S., and does it pose a genuine threat to U.S. interests in the region? If so, what can and should the U.S. do to respond to that threat? This chapter will present the current state of China's military, focusing upon its modernization efforts, and propose that those modernization efforts need to be met with a corresponding U.S. response.

China's Explanation

China's 2004 Defense White Paper explains the reasons for its military modernization, and the methodology behind it. When reading these monographs, it is critical to remember that this White Paper was written for the "benefit" of the international community, and also as a propaganda message for the Chinese populace. In other words, consider the source of the message, and then evaluate the reality of the situation and the evidence available. With that, it is easy to see a divergence between the message and the reality. The White Paper cites five goals and tasks for its national security:

1. To stop separation and promote reunification, guard against and resist aggression, and defend national sovereignty, territorial integrity and maritime rights and interests.
2. To safeguard the interests of national development, promote economic and social development in an all-round, coordinated and sustainable way and steadily increase the overall national strength.

3. To modernize China's national defense in line with both the national conditions of China and the trend of military development in the world by adhering to the policy of coordinating military and economic development, and improve the operational capabilities of self-defense under the conditions of informationalization.
4. To safeguard the political, economic and cultural rights and interests of the Chinese people, crack down on criminal activities of all sorts and maintain public order and social stability.
5. To pursue an independent foreign policy of peace and adhere to the new security concept featuring mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality and coordination with a view to securing a long-term and favorable international and surrounding environment.⁶⁶

These goals and tasks suggest that China's national defense is reactionary to the regional security environment, and is in no way attempting to shape or influence the environment. They portray a situation where China must focus its national security efforts on self-defense, protection of Chinese sovereignty and integrity, and safeguarding national interests. What are missing from any of the above statements are specifics. For example, what does "maintain public order and social stability" really mean? It is a very ambiguous statement, one essentially open to interpretation and thus allowing a broad range of options to achieve that goal or task, however it may be defined. In fact, all of the goals and tasks above share the characteristic of ambiguity, an intentional and skillful writing technique by the Chinese government.

⁶⁶ Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China, *China's National Defense in 2004, December 2004, Chapter II, National Defense Policy*, accessed at <http://www.china.org.cn/e-white/20041227/II.htm> on 30 December 2006.

China continues its Defense White Paper with the “how” of their military modernization:

1. To take the road of composite and leapfrog development
2. To build a strong military by means of science and technology.
3. To deepen the reform of the armed forces.
4. To set up preparations for military struggle.
5. To carry out military exchanges and cooperation.⁶⁷

These five methods focus on advancing from mechanized forces to information-based forces, employing scientific advances and revolutions in military affairs (RMA) to stay competitive with the world’s military development, and emphasizing quality vice quantity in the construct of its military force. It also directs joint and combined arms integration, bringing those capabilities into realistic training focused on specific crises with defined objectives. In essence it is similar to military transformation efforts that have occurred or are ongoing in the U.S. military and in European militaries.

China did not develop and construct this ends/ways/means roadmap for its military modernization on its own. The 2004 Defense White Paper states “The PLA learns from and draws on the valuable experience of foreign armed forces, and introduces, on a selective basis, technologically advanced equipment and better management expertise from abroad to advance the modernization of the Chinese armed forces.”⁶⁸ The first Gulf War, in which the U.S.-led coalition quickly and easily defeated a significant Iraqi army, was a wakeup call to the PLA about the need to modernize.

⁶⁷ Ibid.

⁶⁸ Ibid.

Additionally, the campaigns in Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) and Operation Iraqi Freedom (OIF) further reinforced to the PLA the need for continued modernization, and the roadmap listed above is built upon the models of success recently demonstrated by U.S.-led coalitions. The next section will show that some of the specifics of this effort are directed at preventing Taiwan's independence.

The Struggle for Taiwan

China's public pronouncements advocate peaceful development, with the one blatant exception being Taiwan: China will not lose Taiwan. The PRC will absolutely not tolerate the independence of Taiwan, and has made direct statements to that fact: "It is the sacred responsibility of the Chinese armed forces to stop the 'Taiwan independence' forces from splitting the country."⁶⁹ China has dictated several specific triggers, which if any occur, would force China to respond militarily against Taiwan:⁷⁰

1. A formal declaration of independence [or an undefined moved "towards independence."⁷¹]
2. An indefinite delay in settlement of the issue.
3. Internal unrest on the island.
4. Foreign intervention in Taiwan's internal affairs, including establishment of a formal alliance or stationing of foreign forces.
5. Acquisition of nuclear weapons.
6. If Taiwan's armed forces become comparatively weak [and China feels it could achieve victory without significant consequences from the international community]⁷²

The issue of independence of Taiwan is extremely complex, but as time passes from the establishment of two separate entities in 1949, the bond between mainland Chinese and the people of Taiwan grows weaker. Naturally, the PRC strongly opposes

⁶⁹ Ibid.

⁷⁰ Center for Strategic and International Studies, *China: The Balance Sheet*, 135.

⁷¹ U.S. Department of Defense, *Annual Report to Congress, Military Power of the People's Republic of China 2006*, 38.

⁷² "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – China and Northeast Asia: Taiwan, Armed Forces," posted 20 Feb 2006, accessed at <http://www8.janes.com/search/printfriendly> view on 20 September 2006, 3.

any formal break by Taiwan from the PRC, despite the fact that the ROC has ‘de facto’ independence already. Taiwanese elect their own government via a democratic process, and maintain their own military (focused primarily upon defending against a Chinese invasion). And although it does not enjoy formal diplomatic ties with many nations, Taiwan does integrate and operate globally as if it were an independent nation.

Taiwan’s Road to Independence

Since its emergence as the Republic of China in 1949, Taiwan had been under autocratic rule, and martial law repressed the people’s rights to express dissenting views. The autocratic nature of the government began to change in the late 1980s when martial law was lifted and the Civic Organizations Law was passed, allowing for the formation of political parties, a change from the previous single-party system.⁷³ The Democratic Progressive Party (DPP) emerged as the first opposition party, and over the course of the next two decades, gained power in the Legislative Yuan (LY). The DPP eventually saw its candidate, Chen Shui-Bian, win the Presidential election in 2000, and he was reelected again in 2004. The DPP views Taiwan as a separate and independent nation from China. In October 2001 the DPP passed a resolution that made the proclamation below a part of its party charter, stating with clarity its view of Taiwan as a separate and independent nation, albeit one unable to gain that recognition from mainland China and the international community:

1. Taiwan is a sovereign and independent country. Any change in the independent status quo must be decided by all the residence of Taiwan by means of plebiscite.

⁷³ “Country Watch – Country Review, China: Taiwan,” accessed at http://www.countrywatch.com/cw_topic.aspx?vCOUNTRY=37&TOPIC=APTAW&TYPE=text, on 24 October 2006, 3-4.

2. Taiwan is not a part of the People's Republic of China. China's unilateral advocacy of the "One China Principle" and "One Country Two Systems" is fundamentally inappropriate for Taiwan.
3. Taiwan should expand its role in the international community, seek international recognition, and pursue the goal of entry into the United Nations and other international organizations.
4. Taiwan should renounce the "One China" position to avoid international confusion and to prevent the position's use by China as a pretext for annexation by force.
5. Taiwan should promptly complete the task of incorporating plebiscite into law in order to realize the people's rights. In time of need, it can be relied on to establish consensus of purpose, and allow the people to express their will.
6. Taiwan's government and opposition forces must establish bi-partisan consensus on foreign policy, integrating limited resources, to face China's aggression and ambition. Taiwan and China should engage in comprehensive dialogue to seek mutual understanding and economic cooperation. Both sides should build a framework for long-term stability and peace.⁷⁴

In March 2005, China passed the Anti-secession Law, “for the purpose of opposing and checking Taiwan's secession from China by secessionists in the name of ‘Taiwan independence,’ promoting peaceful national reunification, maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Straits, preserving China's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and safeguarding the fundamental interests of the Chinese nation.”⁷⁵ This was a response to the 2004 reelection of President Chen Shui-Bian, and clearly stated that the PRC views Taiwan as a part of mainland China, and the current partition is a holdover from the 1940s Chinese Civil War. From the PRC’s perspective, the Taiwan issue is purely an internal Chinese matter, and China maintains the right and obligation to use “non-peaceful” means to “protect China’s sovereignty and territorial integrity.”⁷⁶ There is a battle of words between Chinese policy documents (e.g. 2004 Defense White Paper) and the charter of the DPP; the PRC states a goal is to stop separation and promote

⁷⁴ Democratic Progressive Party (ROC), accessed at <http://www.taiwandc.org/nws-9920.htm>, on 2 January 2006.

⁷⁵ National People’s Congress (PRC), Anti-Secession Law, 14 March 2005, accessed at http://english.peopledaily.com.cn/200503/14/eng20050314_176746.html on 2 January 2006.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

reunification, while the DPP claims it is a sovereign and independent country. This divergence makes it easy to see why there is tension between Taiwan and mainland China. Keeping that tension from devolving into military conflict is very important for both the PRC and Taiwan, but also for the U.S. in its efforts to promote regional stability.

As stated earlier, China's main focus is on preparing for a conflict over Taiwan. The Center for Strategic and International Studies states "China's military doctrine, force structure, defense acquisition strategy, planning, and operational training all appear to focus primarily on a Taiwan scenario, including taking into account the possible intervention of the United States."⁷⁷ China's defense industry has increased its capabilities in recent years, but China still relies heavily upon imported weapons, primarily from Russia, to sustain the modernization efforts of its military. Prior to 1989, several European countries exported weapons to China as well, but that ended following the human rights atrocities in Tiananmen Square.⁷⁸ The bulk of these modernization efforts are for the People's Liberation Army Air Force (PLAAF) and People's Liberation Army Navy (PLAN), and include "capable diesel submarines with advanced long-range anti-ship cruise missiles; advanced destroyers outfitted with anti-carrier missiles; third and fourth generation fighter aircraft capable of long-range, precision strike operations; AWACS and tanker aircraft; and short-range missiles."⁷⁹ These modern weapons platforms are all relevant in a Taiwan-straits scenario, and their capabilities are focused on gaining superiority in the straits, inflicting devastating results on Taiwanese forces, and targeting U.S. assets that would respond.

⁷⁷ Center for Strategic and International Studies, *China: The Balance Sheet*, 136.

⁷⁸ Anthony Cordesman, and Martin Kleiber, *Chinese Military Modernization and Force Development, Main Report*, Working Draft, Revised: August 11, 2006, 26.

⁷⁹ Center for Strategic and International Studies, *China: The Balance Sheet*, 152.

If the PRC leadership, in its subjective determination, considered one of the “trigger points” mentioned above to have been reached, they have several military options available to them. David Shambaugh, in his analysis of China’s military modernization, identifies ten possible course of action China could take against Taiwan and responding U.S. forces:

1. Launch precision strikes against command, control, and political targets
2. Special operations forces attack key military and civilian infrastructure
3. Render Taiwan’s air force inoperable by attacks on airfields and shelters
4. Incapacitate Taiwan’s C3I through coordinated attacks (missiles, Information warfare, EMP detonations)
5. Bottleneck/blockade Taiwan’s ports, thus stifling merchandise trade and energy imports
6. Control airspace over Taiwan and the straits, thus allowing for amphibious landings and/or airdrop of paratroopers
7. Create a “cordon” around Taiwan to force the U.S. Navy to operate remotely
8. Interdict logistical supply lines for U.S. forces in the western Pacific
9. Attack U.S. carrier strike groups
10. Deter or prevent U.S. and Taiwan forces from attacking mainland China⁸⁰

Despite a persistent and convincing threat across the straits, Taiwan has been only moderately responsive, and assuming the U.S. will to come to its aid in the case of a Chinese invasion or other military action (e.g. blockade). This has led the U.S. State Department to identify a “capability gap that is widening with the deployment of every new missile, fighter aircraft, submarine, warship, and tank”⁸¹ across the strait. In recent years, the U.S. has urged Taiwan to take a more active role in its defense. The Taiwan Relations Act, Section 2(b)(5) authorizes “The U.S. continues to honor its commitment to make available defense articles and services to enable Taiwan to maintain a sufficient

⁸⁰ David Shambaugh, *Strategic Asia 2005-06: Military Modernization in an Era of Uncertainty*, ed. Ashley Tellis and Michael Wills, Washington D.C.: National Bureau of Asian Research, 2005, 68-69.

⁸¹ Clifford A. Hart, Director, Office of Taiwan Coordination, US Department of State, in remarks to US-Taiwan Business Council Defense Industry Conference, September 12, 2006, accessed at <http://www.state.gov/p/eap/rls/rm/72100.htm> on 15 September 2006.

self-defense capability.”⁸² This U.S. Congressional legislation states “it is the policy of the United States to provide Taiwan with arms of a defensive character.”⁸³ Taiwan currently spends about 2.5% of its GDP on defense, about \$7 billion, with a moderate 5% growth per year in order to maintain the combat readiness of its forces. This force level is insufficient to pose a truly credible deterrent against Chinese aggression, and only through U.S. assurances is Taiwan still relatively safe.

In 2004, the Taiwanese cabinet announced a plan to purchase U.S.-made weapons to “match military advances made by China,” at the cost of approximately \$18 billion. This package included four Kidd-class destroyers (mothballed U.S. inventory), eight diesel-electric patrol submarines, 12 P-3 Orion maritime patrol aircraft, MH-53E minesweeping helicopters, and associated armament for these platforms.⁸⁴ These assets are intended primarily to enable Taiwan to counter a Chinese blockade of their ports, protect Taiwan’s vital sea lines of communication, or combat a hostile PLAN force in the Taiwan Straits.

The ROC Air Force (ROCAF) is by far the most capable of its three military branches, and although quantitatively inferior to China’s (10:1 ratio), it is superior in quality. The ROCAF possesses 146 F-16A/Bs, 57 Mirage 2000s, 102 Indigenous Defense Fighters (IDF), and 60 plus F-5 tigers (to be phased out by 2010).⁸⁵ But that superiority will not last as China continues to modernize its air force in the vicinity of Taiwan, and now has a credible fleet of Russian-built aircraft, along with a large and

⁸² Ibid.

⁸³ United States Congress, *Taiwan Relations Act, Legislative History of Public Law 96-8, 1979*, accessed at <http://web.lexis-nexis.com/congcomp/printdoc> on 20 Sep 2006.

⁸⁴ “Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment – China and Northeast Asia: Taiwan Procurement,” accessed at http://www4.janes.com/subscribe/sentinel/CNAS_doc_view.jsp?Sent_Country=Taiwan&Prod_Name=CNAS&K2DocKey=/content1/janesdata/sent/cnasu/taiws150.htm@current on 3 January 2007.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

capable indigenous fleet. China also has hopes of purchasing 210 Mirage-2000 fighters from France, although a current embargo on EU weapons sales to them is unlikely to be lifted anytime in the near future.⁸⁶

Domestic politics in Taiwan have impacted the ability of President Chen to obtain approval in the LY for the funding of these assets, and there is also uncertainty about the likelihood of a supplier of the diesel submarines, due to China's pressure on potential suppliers. In the short-term (< 10 years), Taiwan will not see any marked improvements to its defense capability, for the reasons mentioned above, without a drastic change of philosophy within the Taiwanese government. Hence it will have to rely upon existing force structure to match a growing Chinese presence across the straits, and this will necessitate U.S. willingness to support Taiwan with direct military intervention in the case of Chinese aggression.

Does Taiwan Really Matter?

Leaving aside the requirements of the Taiwan Relations Act, and the reasons for its creation in the 1970s, is Taiwan of vital interest to the United States? And should the U.S. shoulder the burden of defending the island when Taiwan's leaders are unable and unwilling to adequately provide for their own defense? Taiwan is worthy of the effort needed to defend the island. Even if one disregards the economic value the U.S. gains from trade relations with Taiwan, the overall peace and stability a free and democratic Taiwan brings to the region justifies U.S. efforts.

Taiwan is America's eight largest trading partner and its sixth largest agricultural trading partner, with bilateral trade in 2006 expected to exceed \$60 billion.⁸⁷ The country

⁸⁶ Peter Brooks, The Heritage Foundation, "Lifting of the EU Arms Embargo on China," testimony before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, March 16, 2005, accessed at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/TradeandForeignAid/tst031605a.cfm> on 3 January 2007.

exemplifies President Bush's program of advancing democracy and ridding the world of autocracy, moving from autocratic single-party rule to a full-fledged democracy. For the U.S. to abandon Taiwan and not offer military support would be a grave mistake that would give friends and allies in the region, and around the globe, cause to question the U.S.'s resolve to honor those friendships and alliances.

If one considers the alternative, that is allowing the PRC to gain control over Taiwan, then what would come next? China would then have a strategic foothold to allow it to advance into the South China Sea and across the Pacific. Critical U.S. locations such as military bases in Okinawa and Guam would be easily reachable by Chinese strike aircraft. With this complete, the PLAN would have accomplished the first stage of its three-stage naval deployment, and in the process developed associated capabilities resident in a brown-water navy.⁸⁸ Taiwan would be a strategic foothold from which China could then expand operations into Southeast Asia and the South Pacific.

China's military advances, shrouded in mystery as they may be, do paint a picture of a rapidly growing force, making significant technological force modernization efforts and improvements. Although China claims its military force serves only to ensure adequate defense, there is no identifiable regional nation that presents a threat to justify such military capabilities. Therefore it is not too hard to imagine that China's significant military modernization is intended to allow for dominance over all of its neighbors, and that could easily generate instability and turmoil in the Asia-Pacific region.

⁸⁷ Michael Needham and John Tkacik, published by The Heritage Foundation, *Grim Future for Taiwan's Defenses*, Oct 31, 2006, accessed at <http://www.heritage.org/Research/AsiaandthePacific/wm1243.cfm>, on 3 January 2007, 1.

⁸⁸ The first island chain includes Taiwan and the immediate coastlines that represent China's vital maritime national interests, extending up to 200 nautical miles. The second island chain extends further, out to 700 nautical miles, and encompasses all of Indonesia. The third level is China's global naval force, otherwise known as a blue-water navy. There is no indication that China currently has this type of capability. Anthony Cordesman & Martin Kleiber, *Chinese Military Modernization and Force Development*, 52.

“The region’s stability and prosperity depend on our sustained engagement: maintaining robust partnerships supported by a forward defense posture.”⁸⁹ With the U.S. being a “Pacific nation,” it is crucial that it supports, maintains, and continues to nurture the regional alliances and partnerships. These alliances and partnerships are the cornerstone to achieving U.S. objectives in the Asia-Pacific region.

⁸⁹ White House, *National Security Strategy*, 40.

CHAPTER 4: ALLIES AND PARTNERS

The alliances and partnerships the U.S. maintains in the Asia-Pacific theater are a critical asset, and are worthy of every amount of effort to foster and support. Given the belief that the region holds vital national interests for the U.S., as stated in the 2006 National Security Strategy, it is an easy leap to appreciate the significance of such relationships. Additionally, it is fundamental that the U.S. ensure these allies and partners understand and appreciate the benefit they receive from a robust relationship with the U.S. These relationships allow the U.S. to directly and indirectly apply the diplomatic, military, and economic instruments of national power to project U.S. influence, and hence protect U.S. interests, throughout the region.

China views the region in a likewise fashion. It also has alliances and partnerships, and is using its national power instruments to draw new nations into its circle of friends. This is not to say that China and the U.S. are in an overt “alliance race,” with each nation trying to outmaneuver the other in an effort to draw regional nations into their alliance network, although both nations do seek out and take advantage of opportunities to weaken bonds between the other nation and its allies. It would be too simplistic to define the region as bipolar, with the U.S. and China struggling against each other and using regional nations as “pawns” in the strategic chess game. Regional complexity, globalization, and the interdependence of existing relationships within the region serve to challenge such a simple depiction, instead suggesting the region is a compilation of many bilateral, and sometimes multilateral, bonds that challenge experts to understand the cascading implications and effects of any action. China and the U.S.

can and do have mutual allies in the region, and although that can complicate interaction and engagement, it also can serve to bolster stability and security.



Figure 1: Map of Asia-Pacific Region

It is critical that the U.S. ensure allies and partners in the region do not view themselves simply as tools the U.S. might use to selfishly advance its national interests, particularly in competition with China. On the flip side, the U.S. must ensure that, as China expands its regional influence and matures relationships, there is not any degradation in U.S. alliances, for they serve as a foundation to protecting vital U.S. interests in the region.

This chapter will look at the complex interrelationships between countries in the Asia-Pacific region. Each of the highlighted countries has a significant relationship with the U.S., China, and other regional nations. The complexities of these multilateral

relationships identify that the U.S. must attempt to understand and appreciate the perspective and philosophy of each of these nations, and how U.S. actions can have second and third order effects within the region. This chapter will specifically suggest how the U.S. should or must deal with each nation to promote U.S. interests and ensure stability within the region. Additionally it will highlight methods the U.S. should undertake to gain the necessary leverage it might need with respect to China, when and if it should be required.

Japan

*“The U.S.-Japan alliance remains the most important pact in the Pacific and is as strong as ever.”*⁹⁰

- Admiral Fallon

*In this promising but also potentially dangerous setting, the U.S.-Japan bilateral relationship is more important than ever. With the world’s second largest economy and a well-equipped and competent military, and as our democratic ally, Japan remains the keystone of the U.S. involvement in Asia. The U.S.-Japan alliance is central to America’s global security strategy.”*⁹¹

- Richard Armitage

Japan represents a key partner in the Asia-Pacific region, one that shares a predominance of western values: democracy, capitalism, free trade, security cooperation, and an aspiration for peaceful development regionally and globally. Japan is a stable democracy, the world’s second largest national economy (behind the U.S.), and home to over 47,000 U.S. troops.⁹² It is a shining example of the U.S. ability to positively

⁹⁰ Admiral William J. Fallon, U.S. Navy, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command, in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on U.S. Pacific Command Posture, 7 March 2006, accessed from <https://www.pacom.mil> on 21 November, 2006, 12.

⁹¹ Richard L. Armitage, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, *The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership*, October 11, 2000, 1.

⁹² “Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment – China and Northeast Asia: Japan, Executive Summary,” posted 9 November 2006, accessed at <http://www8.janes.com/search/printfriendlyview> on 22 January 2007, 1.

influence the development of an Asian ally and nation, and the achievements of Japan since World War II, supported by a strong U.S. alliance, support that claim.

What does Japan do for the Region?

From a U.S. perspective, Japan represents a stabilizing influence across the entire Asia-Pacific region. However, certain nations, notably both Koreas and China, do harbor suspicions about Japan's peaceful proclamations. Even with some trepidation from neighboring countries, Japan is a democracy with a solid foundation, and an extremely capable economic power with involvement and influence throughout the region. By Japan's own Constitutional design, its military capability is limited to providing for self-defense, at least suggesting that Japan does not pose any significant threat to neighboring countries. A key part of Japan's ability to stabilize the region without projecting an egregious military advantage is its close relationship and alliance with the United States. But that may be slowly changing, and how the U.S. and Northeast Asian nations perceive and respond to changes in Japan's military construct may prove to upset a stable balance of power in Northeast Asia.

The U.S.-Japanese Relationship Today

The U.S. was able to shape the development of modern Japan, initially serving as an occupying force after WWII. This allowed the U.S., under the direction of General MacArthur, the opportunity to write the Japanese Constitution and form the new Japanese Government. The Japanese leadership and populace were generally supportive of MacArthur's efforts in the late 1940s, and the fruits of his labors are evident in a prosperous and democratic Japan 60 years later.

The U.S. desire is for the U.S. - Japanese bond to evolve towards a “special relationship,” an alliance similar to that of the U.S. and Great Britain.⁹³ Significant economic engagement, mutual defense, and a shared perception of regional and global security threats are the cornerstones leading towards that desired relationship. The U.S. and Japan engage in significant trade, with the U.S. ranked number one in exports from Japan (23%), and the U.S. is the number two importer to Japan (12%). Interestingly, China is Japan’s number one importer, providing about 21% of its total imports.⁹⁴

“Self Defense Force”

Japan and the U.S. are very closely linked in the area of defense and security, both for the territory of Japan, and also within a broader regional context. Japan’s Constitution, and more crucially the interpretation by the Japanese Government, limits Japan’s ability to contribute to security. Chapter II: Renunciation of War, Article 9, of the Japanese Constitution states:

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. In order to accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.⁹⁵

Over the course of the years since the Constitution was written, the interpretation of this chapter has become more liberal, and today Japan maintains a moderately credible military, yet intended for and titled the Self-Defense Force (SDF). The subjectivity surrounding the term self-defense is still quite limited, and according to the Japanese

⁹³ Richard L. Armitage, *The United States and Japan: Advancing Toward a Mature Partnership*, 3.

⁹⁴ “Jane’s Sentinel Security Assessment – China and Northeast Asia: Japan, External Affairs, Relations with the U.S.” posted 9 November 2006, accessed at <http://www8.janes.com/search/printfriendlyview>, on 22 January 2007, 14.

⁹⁵ Government of Japan, *The Constitution of Japan*, accessed from http://www.solon.org/Constitutions/Japan/English/english-Constitution.html#CHAPTER_II on 24 January 2007.

Ministry of Defense (MOD), “it is unconstitutional to possess what is referred to as offensive weapons that, from their performance, are to be used exclusively for total destruction of other countries, since it immediately exceeds the limit of the minimum necessary level of self-defense.”⁹⁶ The Japanese MOD continues its explanation, outlining three conditions in which it could exercise the right of self-defense:

1. There is an imminent and illegitimate act of aggression against Japan
2. There is no appropriate means to deal with this aggression other than resort to the right of self-defense
3. The use of armed strength is confined to the minimum necessary level⁹⁷

Japan's public proclamation of its defense policy appears rather idealistic, and does not completely match the reality of their military power and its application. Since Japan has acquired the capability to deploy and project force far from its own territory (e.g. air-refueling tankers), one can easily discern that the Japanese Government no longer strictly adheres to its limitation on offensive capability. It is this trend that has many of its neighbors in Northeast Asia concerned, but at the same time this shift in Japan's defense philosophy is in step with the U.S. vision of a Japan more able to provide regional, and perhaps global, security support. To further illustrate the loosening of a strict interpretation of the aforementioned pacifist Article 9, Japan allows itself to extend beyond its territory “in the execution of its self-defense [and] is not necessarily confined to the geographic scope of the Japanese territorial land, sea, and airspace.”⁹⁸ Although the Japanese government does not allow its SDF to be employed outside its territory for the “purpose of using force” (except in self-defense), Japanese forces were deployed to Iraq in support of OIF, although in a strictly non-combat role, reinforcing the common

⁹⁶ Japanese Ministry of Defense, *Government View on Purport of Article 9 of Constitution*, accessed at http://www.mod.go.jp/e/index_.htm, on 24 January 2007, 1.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, 1.

⁹⁸ *Ibid.*, 1.

perception that Japan may be paying “lip-service” to its Constitutional limitation. The Japanese Government is slowly paving the way for broader interpretation of its Constitution, and the U.S. needs to continue to stand by Japan and support that effort.

The concept of collective self-defense as understood by international law does allow for one sovereign state to stop an armed attack on a foreign country with which it has close relations, even if it is not directly under attack. The government of Japan does not give itself the latitude to apply that interpretation to its circumstances and Constitutional limitations. This myopic view by the Japanese government benefits Japan in one aspect, it is able to claim that Japan should not be viewed as a major military threat by its neighbors, particularly Korea (both North and South) but also China. On the opposite side, it is one of the obstacles that prevent Japan from having a viable chance of attaining a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) if the Council were to grow in size. It also prevents a further growth and maturing of the U.S.-Japan security relationship.

The limits currently imposed by the Japanese Constitution may be changing under the influence of Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who took office last September. Even under the current narrow interpretation of the Japanese Constitution, he believes “the right [of collective self-defense] can be exercised even within the scope of the current Constitution...the existing interpretation has reached its limit because the prohibition against the exercise of the right, which is based on domestic considerations, is not easily understood on an international level.”⁹⁹ The pressure Abe brings to the Japanese Government, in his attempts to liberalize the interpretation of the Japanese Constitution,

⁹⁹ Shinzo Abe, as Acting Secretary of the ruling Liberal Democratic Party, 2 May 2005, accessed from http://www.findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m0WDQ/is_2005_May_9/ai_n13829377 on 26 January 2007.

is a first and necessary step towards bringing Japan's defense contributions into parity with the international environment in which Japan operates.

Japan's Perception of the Security Situation

Japan's perception of the regional security environment is not much different from the U.S. perspective, although they are closer to and hence feel more threatened by North Korea, China, and an enigmatic Russia. However, the similarities between Japan's and the U.S.'s security perceptions evidence the close partnership and cooperation the two nations share. Japan's 2006 Defense White Paper, published by the then Defense Agency (elevated to full Ministry Status in January 2007), clearly outlines Japan's perception of regional and global threats. In this paper Japan cites terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and regional conflicts stemming from religious and ethnic issues as the major problems for the international community. This paper further spells out regional concerns within the Asia-Pacific region, highlighting territorial disputes, unresolved reunification issues of divided nations (Korea and China/Taiwan), and terrorism and piracy (in Southeast Asia) as being the major threats to regional security.¹⁰⁰

Changing of the Constitution

The next step for Japan, and one that Prime Minister Abe has advocated since before becoming Prime Minister, is to rewrite the Japanese Constitution. Abe desires to pass legislation in 2007 that would allow for a national referendum, putting to the public a vote on changing Japan's pacifist constitution. In December 2006 Abe stated "I want to revise the Constitution while I am in office, though it is a historic task. First I want the

¹⁰⁰ Fukushima Nukaga, Minister of State for Defense, *Defense of Japan 2006 White Paper, Chapter 1 Security Environment Surrounding Japan*, accessed from http://www.mod.go.jp/e/index_.htm on 21 January 2007, 1-4.

legislation for a referendum to be passed in the next ordinary (parliamentary) session.”¹⁰¹

While only the beginning of significant change in Japan, it is a much-needed effort, one that the U.S. hopes will open doors to even greater security cooperation between the two nations.

As perhaps a preliminary accomplishment to prepare the Japanese populace for a Constitutional Referendum, Prime Minister Abe recently upgraded the Defense Agency to full ministry status with the moniker Japanese Defense Ministry. On 9 January 2007, Mr. Fumio Kyuma was named Defense Minister, and took charge of the newly formed ministry.¹⁰² This move gives the military department greater budget power, and places its Minister on equal footing with the other members of the Japanese Cabinet.

Addressing the concern about the upgrade in status being a potential violation of the Constitution, Mr. Kyuma said “the Defense Ministry needs to transform itself both in name and as a policy-making body so that it can meet the expectations and earn the trust of the people...the security environment in areas around our country continues to be severe, as seen through North Korea’s missile launches and announcement of a nuclear test.”¹⁰³

If Japan proceeds down a path of Constitutional change, what impact might that have upon the security situation in the region, and what implication might exist for the U.S.? Is it likely that it would be interpreted by Japan’s neighbors as a hostile act, the prelude to increasing and destabilizing efforts by the Japanese to develop their own hegemony in the region? China, both Koreas, and also Russia, may find that move by

¹⁰¹ Shinzo Abe, in a speech at the Parliamentary Session, 19 December 2006, accessed from http://exproxy6.ndu.edu/login?url=http://proquest.umi.com/pq_ on accessed 26 January 2007, 1.

¹⁰² Japanese Ministry of Defense Home Page, accessed at http://www.mod.go.jp/e/index_.htm on 23 February 2007.

¹⁰³ Fumio Kyuma, Japanese Minister of Defense, Asian Wall Street Journal, 10 January 2007, 11.

Japan to be threatening, especially when considering Japan's past of brutal imperialist aggression against Korea and China. The irony is that Japan already boasts "perhaps the most advanced and well-equipped military in Northeast Asia, although the armed forces of China and North Korea are far more numerous."¹⁰⁴ The Japanese Self-Defense force is very credible and capable of applying its power, albeit limited to the application of force in a defensive manner, at least according to Japan's public pronouncements of their defense policy. If Japan changed its Constitution, it would only match its legislation to the credible and capable military it maintains. Japan could then assume a greater and more contributory role to regional and global security, and also pave the way for the allowance of collective self-defense, something the U.S. would like to see from Japan. This move would greatly enhance the stability and security in the region, and allow the U.S. to pass on to Japan security roles currently filled solely by the U.S. However, it would require some effective strategic communications efforts on the part of the Japanese, and the U.S., to convince regional nations that Japan does not seek hegemony.

The Dangers of Change

Some critics of Japan's potential Constitutional revision argue that with the change Japan would trend away from the U.S. as well as the existing structure of shared defense efforts and the close alliance they currently share. Critics suggest Japan would strive to establish a hegemony of its own making, and single-handedly assume leadership in Northeast Asia. Although feasible, this course of action is unlikely for the foreseeable future. Japan is very closely allied with the United States, and is evidence by the 2006 meeting between the principals of State/Foreign Affairs and Defense of the U.S. and Japan (known casually as the 2 + 2 relationship). Their Joint Statement identified the

¹⁰⁴ "Jane's Sentinel Security Assessment – China and Northeast Asia: Japan," Executive Summary, 3.

solid nature of the U.S. – Japanese relationship: “The U.S.-Japan Alliance, with the U.S. - Japan security relationship at its core, is the indispensable foundation of Japan’s security and of peace and stability in the Asia-Pacific region and the linchpin of American security policy in the region..... [We share] fundamental values....including basic human rights, freedom, democracy, and the rule of law.... alliance must continue to evolve in depth and scope....reinforced by continued firm public support in both countries.”¹⁰⁵

Bilateral Military Operations

As already mentioned, the U.S. maintains a significant troop presence in Japan, both on the mainland, and on the island of Okinawa. Change being a constant in military and political affairs, the current construct of U.S. military force strength, basing locations, and U.S.-Japanese combined military operations is undergoing significant upgrades. The aforementioned 2+2 alliance of State/Foreign Affairs and Defense leadership published the “United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation” in May 2006. In this key document, they published the final status of initiatives for realignment of U.S. forces and also the accompanying transitions to the Japanese SDF:

1. Realignment on Okinawa – this realignment will move more than 8,000 U.S. Marines from Okinawa to Guam, close MCAS Futenma, and also relocate several other U.S. units. Construction costs for the Guam relocation project exceed \$10B, and the Japanese government is providing over \$6B.
2. Improvement of U.S. Army Command and Control Capability – Camp Zama (mainland Japan) C2 structure will undergo transformations to be complete by 2008, and subsequently the Ground SDF Central Readiness Force Headquarters will relocate to Camp Zama (by 2012).

¹⁰⁵ Condoleezza Rice, Donald Rumsfeld, Taro Aso, Fukushiro Nukaga, *United States-Japan Security Consultative Committee Document Joint Statement*, May 1, 2006, accessed from http://www.mod.go.jp/e/index_.htm on 26 January 2007.

3. Yokota Air Base and Air Space – Air SDF Air Defense Command (ADC) and relevant units will relocate to Yokota Air Base by 2010. In conjunction with that move, the U.S. and Japan will establish a bilateral, joint operations coordination center (BJOCC), including a collocated air and missile defense coordination function.
4. Relocation of Carrier Air Wing from Atsugi Air Facility to MCAS Iwakuni
5. Missile Defense – Air SDF Shariki Base is now home to a new U.S. X-Band radar system, operational since the summer of 2006. The data from this radar will be shared with the Japanese government and military, and additionally U.S. Patriot PAC-3 air defense systems will be stationed on Kadena Air Base (Okinawa).¹⁰⁶

Clearly these initiatives, the result of several years of negotiations and discussions, indicate the dedication and commitment from both nations to preserve and grow an already robust U.S.-Japan alliance.

A Nuclear Neighbor – Cause for Concern?

In 2006, North Korea did two things that caused great concern for Japan (and the rest of the international community), but in a circumstantial manner strengthened the U.S.-Japan alliance. First, the North Koreans conducted tests of their Taepo-Dong II ICBMs into the Sea of Japan. Although these tests were deemed a failure, they indicated the nature of North Korea's military progression and intentions. The Taepo-Dong II far surpasses the range of its predecessor, the Taepo-Dong I, and has the range to reach the North American continent. This move encouraged the U.S. to pressure Japan to reexamine its collective self-defense ban. The second incident was the North Korean's test of a nuclear weapon in October 2006. Japan, even more than ever, relies upon the U.S. for deterrence protection under the "nuclear umbrella" the U.S. maintains for its own defense. The U.S. more than willingly includes Japan in this protective

¹⁰⁶ Condoleezza Rice, Donald Rumsfeld, Taro Aso, Fukushiro Nukaga, *United States-Japan Roadmap for Realignment Implementation*, May 1 2006, accessed from http://www.mod.go.jp/e/index_.htm on 6 February 2007.

environment, and reaps the subsequent benefits of a strong allied partner in close proximity to Asia's two major hotspots, North Korea and the Taiwan Straits.

Another area of concern is the historical animosity between the Koreans (both North and South) and the Japanese. The abuses and atrocities inflicted on the Korean people by the Japanese before and during World War II still linger in the memories of many Koreans. It does not help the situation when the Japanese government continues to downplay these atrocities, honor Japanese war criminals, and in some cases question the true nature and severity of their soldier's conduct in occupied Korea and China as well. Hence while South Koreans may feel some closeness and ties towards their North Korean "brothers" and also towards the Chinese, such strong feelings of sentiment do not exist towards the Japanese. This forces the U.S. to proceed carefully with strengthening its Japan alliance, for it is also important to keep the South Koreans looking towards the U.S. as a strategic partner. To allow otherwise could give the South Koreans incentive to drift towards closer ties to China, potentially to the detriment of the U.S.

The Korean Peninsula

In contrast to the strong relationship between the U.S. and Japan, U.S. and South Korean strategic visions are diverging, due primarily to differing philosophies and agendas regarding security on the Korean Peninsula. U.S. relations with South Korea, otherwise known as the Republic of Korea (ROK), have been predominantly solid from the end of World War II through the end of the Cold War, with the occasional turbulence as would be expected of international relations. Formed as a critical alliance following the Korean War (1950-1953), the U.S. and South Korea collectively focused on North Korean aggression. But once the Cold War ended, the U.S. was slow to make major

changes to strategy regarding the Korean Peninsula, particularly in its views and attitudes towards North Korea. “The two nations have grown apart: they perceive the threat from the North differently, advance very different responses to the [Democratic People’s Republic of Korea] DPRK’s nuclear threats, and foresee a significantly different future relationship.”¹⁰⁷ Clearly North Korea is a threat, especially to regional U.S. partners, but one that requires the U.S. to develop a strategy that looks through the perspective of those partners, particularly South Korea, and also Japan. The U.S. needs to evaluate any issues, actions, and decisions through the lens of the South Koreans, a critical ally that lives on the peninsula with one of the world’s worst dictators, who now possesses nuclear weapons capability. The biggest challenge the U.S. faces today is being able to adapt its relationship with South Korea to stay in focus with their philosophy, and at the same time balance that against vital U.S. interests.

Partners in the Cold War

The Korean War (1950-1953), which technically has not ended since there was an armistice but not a follow-on peace treaty, brought the U.S. and South Korea into a strategic partnership. They were aligned against potential and expected aggression from North Korea, who was supported from both China and the Soviet Union. This well-established relationship thrived during the era of the Cold War, where the likelihood of a North Korean invasion into South Korea was high. U.S. and South Korean troops, along with troops under the United Nations Command (UNC), built a synchronized and well-orchestrated defense of South Korea, with thousands of coalition troops prepared to repel an invasion from across the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ).

¹⁰⁷ Ted Carpenter and Doug Bandow, *The Korean Conundrum: America’s Troubled Relations with North and South Korea* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004), 3.

During the period of the Cold War, South Korea benefited greatly from its emerging democratic government, growing capitalist economic system, close relationship with the U.S., and international trade. Today, South Korea is the 12th largest economy in the world, measured according to GDP purchasing power parity.¹⁰⁸ In contrast, North Korea is “one of the world’s most centrally- planned and isolated economies ... facing desperate economic conditions ... [and] suffers from chronic food shortages caused by natural disasters and economic mismanagement.”¹⁰⁹ North Korea relies heavily upon foreign aid to feed its population.

For the most part, the alliance between the U.S. and South Korea has been very strong. The October 1953 Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the South Korea committed the “U.S. to give assistance to [South] Korea...in the event of an armed attack against territory which has been recognized by the U.S. as lawfully brought under the administrative control of the ROK.”¹¹⁰ The essence of the treaty obligated the U.S. to assist South Korea, but also enabled it to position U.S. forces in South Korea. “The Republic of Korea grants, and the United States of America accepts, the right to dispose United States land, air and sea forces in and about the territory of the Republic of Korea as determined by mutual agreements.”¹¹¹ The treaty and U.S. and coalition forces have served their desired purpose for over fifty years: it dissuaded the North Koreans from invading South Korea.

A Country Divided, or Two Countries Seeking to be Reunited?

¹⁰⁸ “Country Watch – Country Review: South Korea, Economic Overview,” accessed at http://www.countrywatch.com/cw_topic.aspx?type=text&vcountry=92&topic=MAOVR, 11 Feb 2007, 1.

¹⁰⁹ “Country Watch – Country Review: North Korea, Economic Overview,” accessed at http://www.countrywatch.com/cw_topic.aspx?type=text&vcountry=91&topic=MAOVR, 4 Mar 2007, 1.

¹¹⁰ Governments of the Republic of Korea and the United States of America, *Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of Korea*; October 1, 1953, accessed at <http://www.yale.edu/lawweb/avalon/diplomacy/korea/kor001.htm>, on 6 October 2006, 3

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 2.

The U.S. fails to give sufficient attention to how the Koreans, both North and South, view the situation on the peninsula. The overwhelming majority of South Koreans, particularly those under 40 who did not live through the Korean War, have softened their views towards North Korea, and simultaneously increased their anti-America sentiment. An April 2003 poll indicated that South Koreans in their twenties and thirties expressed more dislike for the United States than North Korea, and they are more vocal in their calls for a U.S. troop withdrawal from the Korean Peninsula.¹¹² A more recent poll, conducted in February 2007, suggested that “nearly half of South Korean youths who will be old enough to vote in the country's next elections say Seoul should side with North Korea if the United States attacks the communist nation...40.7 percent said Seoul should remain neutral...and only 11.6 percent said the South should back its longtime U.S. ally.”¹¹³ This is certainly a trouble spot for American policy, particularly if the U.S. views its presence on the peninsula as a strategic necessity. Currently the U.S. has downplayed any apparent challenges in the U.S.-South Korean relationship, as is evident by Admiral Fallon's comments to the U.S. Senate: “The U.S.-ROK alliance is healthy and evolving. The transformation and rebalancing of our military forces continue on pace with no impact to our readiness to decisively defeat aggression from North Korea, if required.”¹¹⁴ U.S.-ROK relations are not in serious danger, but subtle warning signs exist that the U.S. needs to refocus its philosophy towards the Korean Peninsula, and bring it more in line with the prevailing mentality and philosophy in South Korea.

¹¹² Ted Carpenter and Doug Bandow, *The Korean Conundrum*, 18.

¹¹³ Breitbart online News Service, Poll: Youths Back N. Korea if Attacked, Feb 21, 2007, accessed at <http://www.breitbart.com/news/2006/02/21/D8FTU7HO2.html> on 5 March 2007.

¹¹⁴ Admiral William J. Fallon, in testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee on U.S. Pacific Command Posture, 3.

South Korea is fundamentally focused on reunification of all Koreans on the peninsula, and the South Korean Government has, as one of its Cabinet-level organizations, a Ministry dedicated solely to the unification of the Korean Peninsula. Founded in 1969, “the Ministry of Unification marks the concrete and positive expression of national desire and willingness to achieve unification. The works and functions regarding unification, which have been conducted by various agencies of the government, should be centralized under the Ministry of Unification.”¹¹⁵ Although South Korea acknowledges it may be a long time until unification comes to fruition, it is slowly advancing the cause and idea, and doing so through growing diplomatic and economic engagement with North Korea, laying the groundwork for eventual unification.

The South Korean Ministry of Unification has eight major functions, utilizing soft power while displaying their good will towards North Korea:

1. Developing Unification Policies - policy creation and analysis, study of other countries integration, public opinion polls/analysis, political education and public awareness, and international cooperation.
2. Analysis of North Korea – focusing primarily on the political, military, and socio-economic conditions.
3. Inter-Korean Exchanges and Cooperation – Policy development, issuing licenses for personnel and exchange, and managing the Fund for Inter-Korean for Cooperation.
4. Humanitarian Assistance – Policy for humanitarian issues of North Korean people, separated families issues, and handling dislocated North Koreans (defectors) by providing them settlement and job training.
5. Political Education on Unification – Training experts, educators, and government/civic officials, and fostering public opinion at home and abroad.
6. Inter-Korean Dialogue – Logistics and information management.
7. South-North Transit – Opening railroads and road and supporting all operations of the South-North Transit Plaza.

¹¹⁵ President Park Chung-hee's speech at the opening ceremony of the ministry on March 1969: Goals of the Ministry of Unification, accessed at <http://www.unikorea.go.kr/english/EAM/EAM02011.jsp> on 11 February 2007.

8. Light Water Reactors – Planning and implementing the LWR project.¹¹⁶

South Korea is taking realistic and legitimate steps today toward the future unification of the Korean peninsula, although generally admitting there is no target date for that to occur. South Korea closely examined the unification of East and West Germany in the early 1990s, and hopes to avoid the economic and social trauma that West Germany experienced after the Berlin Wall came down. “In fact, the South fears an early peaceful reunification almost as much as war. It watched German reunification with horror, recognizing that a similar Korean experience would be extraordinarily costly.”¹¹⁷ For the foreseeable future (as long as a dictator rules North Korea), South Korea, with UNC support, needs to maintain the hard power capability to deter and, if necessary, defeat North Korean aggression.

However, the unification priorities listed earlier highlight that the South Koreans favor soft power as a gentler, and more effective, method to work with the North Koreans. “In a very complex way and one that is different from what it was 10 years ago because now there is a multiplicity of contacts....Two transportation corridors have been opened north of Seoul and near the east coast. There is a tourist arrangement, the development of the railroad link north of Seoul, and the possibility of the Kaesong Industrial Zone Development.”¹¹⁸ Clearly South Korea is preparing for the future on the Korean peninsula, and the U.S. needs to foster and engender a similar approach.

¹¹⁶ Lee, Jae-jeong, Minister of Unification, *Functions of the Ministry of Unification*, accessed at <http://www.unikorea.go.kr/english/EAM/EAM0201I.jsp> on 11 February 2007.

¹¹⁷ Ted Galen Carpenter and Doug Bandow, *The Korean Conundrum*, 35.

¹¹⁸ James A Kelly, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, U.S. Department of State, in a hearing before the Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, March 2, 2004 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2004), 9.

The U.S. needs to ask itself whether it views South Korea, particularly its significant troop presence there, as a necessary requirement for the support of vital national interests. It is an oft-made argument that U.S. troops on the Korean peninsula are simply “nuclear hostages,” and that today South Korea has more than sufficient ability to defend itself against North Korean aggression. In fact, South Korean President Roh Moohyun recently commented, “We have sufficient power to defend ourselves. We have nurtured [a] mighty national armed forces that absolutely no one can challenge...we should be able to develop our military into one with full command of operations.”¹¹⁹ Certainly the U.S. needs the ability to influence and perhaps leverage a North Korea that continually and without a clear rationale flagrantly flaunts and challenges the international community, as it has done recently with its missile launches and nuclear tests. But the need for a large military force on the peninsula has diminished in recent years, and consequently the South Koreans have urged, and the U.S. has agreed, to a transition in the peacetime and wartime posturing of U.S. forces. South Korea already maintains peacetime operational control (OPCON) of its forces (since 1994), and the U.S. has agreed to transfer wartime operational control of South Korean forces to the ROK Warfighting Command, with the U.S. in a supporting role.¹²⁰ This is still an ongoing effort, with eventual completion of this goal between 2009 and 2012.

In addition to this agreement, which gives more authority and responsibility to the South Koreans for its own defense, the U.S. has begun to move troops away from the

¹¹⁹ Roh Moohyun, President of South Korea, in a speech to graduates of the Korean Air Force Academy, March 2005, extracted from an article by Doug Bandow, *Seoul Searching: Ending the U.S.-Korean Alliance, The National Interest* (Washington, Fall 2005), accessed at <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=2&did=899101091&SrchMode=1&sid=1&Fmt=3&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1171331807&clientId=3921> on 4 October 2005.

¹²⁰ General B.B. Bell, Commander United Nations Command, Combined Forces Command, and United States Forces Korea, in a speech to the Seoul Foreign Correspondent’s Club, January 18, 2007, accessed at www.usfk.org on 9 February 2007.

DMZ, and thus diminished their role as a “tripwire” and initial response to North Korean aggression. A key part of this effort was the moving of the Yongsan garrison from Seoul to further south on the peninsula, and simultaneously increasing the capabilities of the South Korean military. No longer is South Korea a “free rider” in the security environment on the Korean Peninsula, but it is taking active and substantial efforts to defend itself.

U.S. Interests on the Korean Peninsula

If the South Koreans are taking a more active and capable defense role, then what is the strategic importance of the Korean peninsula to the U.S.? In essence, it boils down to a few important considerations. First, the U.S. wants to maintain some presence on the peninsula to influence and leverage North Korea, display its commitment to South Korea, and honor the mutual defense treaty. The U.S. is not necessarily concerned with North Korea attacking North America with nuclear weapons. North Korea has at best a small number of nuclear weapons, and no ballistic missile capability than can deliver them to continental North America. Kim Jong-Il realizes and understands that to do so would reap catastrophic results upon his country and his regime. More likely is that North Korea could distribute nuclear technology or weapons to other nations (e.g. Iran) or to non-state actors such as global terrorist organizations. U.S. presence on the peninsula does not directly enable leveraging North Korea, but facilitates close partnership with South Korea and the multilateral effort (e.g. Six-Party Talks) to manage a nuclear North Korea.

Second, the U.S. wants to keep strategic ties with South Korea to avoid them drifting too close to China (and too far away from the U.S.), and to capitalize on South

Korea's close ties with China. Finally, the U.S. wants South Korea as a strategic partner in case of conflict in the Taiwan Straits. In essence, the strategic alliance between the U.S. and South Korea is not solely about the South Korea. Instead the U.S. focus is about advancing diplomacy with North Korea, maintaining influence in Northeast Asia, and providing the U.S. a credible and capable regional ally.

U.S.-DPRK Relations

In the past few years, North Korea has blatantly disregarded previous agreements on nuclear non-proliferation, and with the missile launches and nuclear tests of 2006, has further isolated itself. The result has been a drastic reduction in international aid, mostly food and fuel. The DPRK government continually propagandizes a message suggesting the U.S. is intent upon invading North Korea, perhaps as a preemptive strike against nuclear facilities.

The reality is that North Korea's nuclear weapons were not developed solely for deterrence, unlike other nuclear-armed nations, who maintain a nuclear weapons stock to deter aggression. North Korea may consider an invasion from the U.S., or one of its allies, as a possibility and see the need for nuclear deterrence to protect its sovereignty. But that is not the dominant benefit that North Korea has achieved in entering into the group of nuclear-capable nations.

For North Korea, nuclear weapons essentially serve two purposes. The first is to gain international recognition and clout, or at least the appreciation that it is a nation to be reckoned with. Sitting where it is with its isolated, introverted state, a signal that they now can detonate a nuclear weapon ensures North Korea can not be ignored by the international community. Obviously this tactic is effective, as a nuclear North Korea is

an item of global concern, and only the war in Iraq sits above the North Korean issue in terms of international issues that the U.S. is currently handling. The second purpose is to use the nuclear weapons as a leverage tool to get cash (perhaps from other rogue states or terrorist groups) and other resources (mostly energy aid) necessary for North Korea to function and tend to the basic needs of its population, not to mention the particular and quite expensive needs of Kim Jong-Il. As an example, during the fifth round of Six-Party Talks (February 2007), North Korea agreed to close its main nuclear complex (Yongbyon) within 60 days, and also disable all its nuclear facilities. In return, the United States and regional nations would provide North Korea the equivalent of 1 million tons of heavy fuel oil.¹²¹ Clearly the U.S. and other members of the Six-Party Talks recognize the danger of North Korea having nuclear weapons and its ability to distribute them.

Another key point, and just as important and substantial as the agreement to cease nuclear operations, is that “the DPRK and the U.S will start bilateral talks aimed at resolving pending bilateral issues and moving toward full diplomatic relations.”¹²² Although it is probably well into the future before it would become a reality, the idea of bilateral talks is a forerunner towards full diplomatic recognition and the U.S. establishing an embassy in Pyongyang. If the U.S. were able and willing to continue with bilateral negotiations, culminating in an Embassy in North Korea, this would also greatly benefit the U.S.-South Korean alliance. It would demonstrate to the South Koreans that the U.S. is committed to a lasting peace on the peninsula, and would further the South

¹²¹ Condoleezza Rice, U.S. Secretary of State, in a press briefing on 13 February 2007, accessed at <http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2007/feb/80496.htm> on 18 February 2007.

¹²² Christopher R. Hill, Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Joint Statement following the fifth round of the Six-Party Talks, accessed at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2007/february/80479.htm> on 18 February 2007, 1.

Korean's efforts towards unification. During the Cold War, the U.S. maintained diplomatic negotiations with the Soviet Union, and the same principle would hold today with North Korea. Additionally, as shown previously in this paper, when the U.S. began to "normalize" relations with China during the Nixon administration, both countries benefited greatly and in general tensions were eased between the two nations. Ample evidence suggests that if the U.S. were to initiate bilateral negotiations with North Korea, it would be a significant leap forward and provide assurance to its key allies in both South Korea and Japan. The conditions now are fertile to exploit this great opportunity, and Assistant Secretary Hill, lead U.S. negotiator at the Six-Party Talks, has set the precedent on how the U.S. should interact and negotiate with North Korea. It remains to be seen whether North Korea will hold to the terms of the agreement.

It is important to note that it was not specifically bilateral negotiations that achieved the recent success of the Six-Party Talks although they were fundamental to its success. Previous bilateral agreements between the U.S. and North Korea had failed to achieve any real progress, and the end result was both sides suggesting or outright accusing the other side of cheating on the agreements. Clearly the North Koreans are culpable in that account, for previous agreements had as a requirement the dismantling of its nuclear programs, and the test in October 2006 showed they had not been forthright. The U.S. too has not been completely free from guilt in non-compliance with previous agreements, but the bilateral nature of the agreements has made it easy for both parties to shirk their commitments. This time, the outcome might well be different, since this multilateral agreement resulted from the pressure by five countries – the U.S., China, Japan, South Korea, and Russia, and will be implemented in phases, with the

International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) responsible for monitoring North Korea's compliance.

The U.S.-South Korean Alliance: Foundation for the Future

The foundation for a solid U.S.-South Korean alliance is a strong defense against North Korean aggression; albeit one that places more of the burden for that defense on the South Koreans. Transformation of the UNC and CFC have begun, but the initiatives thus far are only the beginning, and South Korea needs to take a more active leadership and budgetary role, as the U.S. and other U.N. nations take a less participatory role.

Building upon the arguable assumption that South Korea can defend itself against North Korea, the U.S. needs to continue to update its force structure in South Korea. It also needs to persuade the ROK to take more responsibility for its own defense, to include spending increases to promote peace both on the Korean peninsula and throughout the entire region. These transformations of the U.S.-South Korean alliance will bring it up to date with the current security environment in Northeast Asia, and thus allow the U.S. to more broadly focus its efforts on regional security efforts.

Second to encouraging the South Koreans to take a more active defense role, the U.S. needs to reconsider its approach to dealing with North Korea. In many ways, this should actually be the main focus, for most relations with South Korea all directly or indirectly deal with North Korea. For the U.S., it is also essential to understand and appreciate the Korean sentiment related to unification. The overwhelming South Korean philosophy is that the Korean peninsula, although two distinct countries, really contain one people that are temporarily divided. The U.S. needs to display some diplomatic

humbleness and be willing to engage in cooperative and actionable diplomatic negotiations with North Korea.

There is a possibility that normal diplomatic relations between the U.S. and North Korea would indicate to South Korea that unification is not supported by the U.S., and that establishing an Embassy would indicate the permanence of a divided peninsula. However, that action would more accurately reflect the U.S. understanding of the current environment, not its vision for the future of the peninsula. A U.S. Embassy, coupled with bilateral negotiations, would enhance and enable multilateral talks between North Korea and the UNC, perhaps leading to a peace treaty that has been absent for over fifty years.

Lastly, the U.S. needs to encourage and enable South Korea to expand its security involvement beyond the peninsula. Korea already contributes to several ongoing operations, with over 3,500 Korean soldiers deployed to support OIF and OEF.¹²³ This indicates that the ROK is committed to supporting U.S. and U.N. operations globally. The next step for the ROK is to take a more active role in the Asian-Pacific region, and help to develop a truly regional security cooperation program. The U.S. can help this effort by bringing together Japanese and South Korean military leaders, and thus encouraging collaboration and eventually security partnerships. Doing so will enable the U.S. to continue to reduce and restructure its force posture in North-East Asia, and direct more of its efforts towards less democratic, less economically stable, and hence more volatile areas in the region – such as South-East Asia.

¹²³ Ministry of National Defense, Republic of Korea, Status of Overseas Troops, accessed from <http://www.mnd.go.kr/mndEng/WhatsNew/OverseasTroops/index.jsp> on 18 February 2007.

South-East Asia

“For most of the three decades since the end of the Vietnam War, U.S. Security Policy has treated Southeast Asia as if it hardly existed. Such benign neglect might be tolerable if the United States did not face formidable strategic challenges to its interests in the region. But it does, and America can ill afford to sleepwalk through the next decade in Southeast Asia. Too much is at stake.”¹²⁴

Dr. Marvin C. Ott

The region of South-East Asia is absolutely vital to the interests of the U.S. and its regional allies. South-East Asia, stretching from Burma (Myanmar) in the Northwest down through the Indonesian Archipelago in the Southeast, and up to the Philippines in the Northeast, encompasses more than 4.5 million square kilometers with a diverse population exceeding 500 million. Within this broad area, ten countries collectively have formed the Association of South-East Asian Nations (ASEAN): Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Burma (also known as Myanmar), the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.¹²⁵ The U.S. maintains mutual defense treaties with the Philippines and Thailand, as well as close military ties with Singapore. Additionally, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines are major areas of interest and activity in the ongoing GWOT.

¹²⁴ Marvin C. Ott, Southeast Asian Security Challenges: America's Response? October 2006.

¹²⁵ Association of South-East Asian Nations, Overview and member countries, accessed from <http://www.aseansec.org/74.htm> on 19 February 2007.



Figure 2: Map of Southeast Asia

Within the confines of South-East Asia lies one of the world's most strategic waterways, the Strait of Malacca. The Strait, over 600 miles long, is situated near the coasts of Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia. It is the vital link between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean, and more than fifty thousand ships pass through the strait each year, carrying over 30 percent of the world's trade goods as well as more than 80 percent of Japan's oil supply.¹²⁶ Furthermore, with an ever-increasing demand for energy supplies from the Middle East and Africa, China relies upon open and accessible passage through the Strait. In 2004, the U.S. Energy Information Administration reported that over 11 million barrels of oil per day passed through the Strait, bound for destinations around the Asia-Pacific region. In recent years, piracy has increased significantly in the waters of Southeast Asia, and therefore the U.S. has established the

¹²⁶ South Asia Analysis Group, Paper No. 1033, *Straits of Malacca: Security Implications*, 18 June 2004, accessed at <http://www.saag.org/papers11/paper1033.html> on 19 February 2007.

Regional Maritime Security Initiative (RMSI) to intervene as required to guarantee safe maritime travel.

In addition to terrorist concerns and piracy activities, South-East Asian nations are concerned about China's military buildup in recent years. Although focused predominantly on Taiwan, "South-East Asian states fear that the region's primary trade route – the South China Sea – could be next."¹²⁷ China has been slowly advancing its interests in South-East Asia, using economic leverage and security incentives to create "a strategic partnership with the ASEAN states designed to reduce regional suspicion and help the PRC acquire a measure of legitimacy within Southeast Asia."¹²⁸

The best avenue of approach for the U.S. to counter China's growth and emergence into Southeast Asia is to maintain strong and viable partnerships and alliances, with varying levels of military, diplomatic, and economic engagement. Southeast Asian nations display diverse feelings towards a strong American presence: some (such as Singapore) avidly support it, while others (like Indonesia) are at best moderate supporters of a U.S. presence. "All ASEAN states either tacitly or openly welcome a U.S. military presence along the East Asian littoral. The U.S. presence is beneficial in that it reduces Southeast Asia's responsibility to only providing regional security, and therefore permits each state to devote more resources to local defense and development."¹²⁹ In other words, not all nations in Southeast Asia would prefer heavy U.S. involvement, but almost all realize the potential gains, so they tolerate the lesser evil of U.S. presence. With the U.S. assisting in providing regional (mostly maritime)

¹²⁷ Sheldon W. Simon, *Strategic Asia 2005-06: Military Modernization in an Era of Uncertainty* (Seattle, National Bureau of Asian Research, 2005), 273.

¹²⁸ Ibid., 273-274.

¹²⁹ Ibid., 279.

security, regional nations are then able to focus on internal issues, which are their predominant concern: separatism, ethnic and religious dissidents, and the smuggling of contraband, people, and arms.¹³⁰

Philippines

In 1951, the U.S. and the Philippines signed a mutual defense treaty, pledging to “declare publicly and formally their sense of unity and their common determination to defend themselves against external armed attack, so that no potential aggressor could be under the illusion that either of them stands alone in the Pacific Area.”¹³¹ Since that time, the two nations have had a predominantly steadfast alliance, with a foundation built upon cultural, historic, and economic ties that all led to a desire for collective self-defense.

In the early 1990s, the Philippine Senate rejected a proposed base treaty that would provide the U.S. with use of the Subic Bay Naval Base for another 10 years. By the end of 1992, all U.S. forces were removed from the Philippines, and both Subic Bay and Clark AB (heavily damaged by a volcano eruption) were turned over to the Filipinos, who converted both facilities into commercial ventures. This was a low point in U.S.-Filipino relations. The situation began to improve in the late 1990s. In 1999, the U.S.-Filipino Visiting Forces Agreement (VFA) was approved, enabling U.S. ship visits and initiating large force exercises between the two countries.¹³²

It was under this well-established security relationship that the U.S. was able to expand its war on terrorism into the Philippines, “allowing U.S. troops to train Filipino

¹³⁰ Ibid., 268.

¹³¹ *Mutual Defense Treaty between the Republic of Philippines and the United States of America*, 30 August 1951, accessed at <http://www.dfa.gov.ph/vfa/frame/frmmdt.htm> on 19 February 2007.

¹³² U.S. Department of State, Background Note: Philippines, October 2006, U.S.-Philippines Relations, accessed at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2794.htm> on 19 February 2007.

military and police forces to root out and destroy the reportedly Al Qaeda-linked Abu Sayyaf Group.”¹³³ This has proved to be a win-win situation for both the Philippines and the U.S. The U.S. needs to cooperate with the Philippines, but do so delicately, to allow for subtle yet very important U.S. influence in the region. Doing so enables the U.S. to combat terrorism in Southeast Asia, and also provides a key ally with whom the U.S. frequently conducts military exchanges and exercises. The Philippines have been the recipient of vast increases in military aid from the U.S. since 2002, reaching over \$70 million between 2004 and 2006.¹³⁴

Following the “expulsion” of U.S. forces from the Philippines in 1992, China was able to gain uncontested occupation of the Mischief Reef, a small island in the South China Sea. Mischief reef, part of the larger chain of islands known as the Spratly Chain, is one of many islands or pieces of land claimed by at least six countries in their efforts to exploit the strategic importance and natural resources inherent in the South China Sea. In 1999, then Filipino President Joseph Estrada’s National Security Council “identified the Spratly dispute as one of its two ‘most urgent security concerns’ – the other being attacks by Muslim separatist rebels in the Southern island of Mindanao.”¹³⁵

These two themes bring the U.S. and the Philippines together to jointly offset two major threats that are of major consequence to both nations. “The War on terror could fulfill American and Filipino priorities: eradicating terrorism and hemming in Chinese power.”¹³⁶ It is this type of mutually beneficial endeavor that will enable the

¹³³ Justine A. Rosenthal, “Southeast Asia: Archipelago of Afghanistans?,” *Orbis*, Summer 2003, 488.

¹³⁴ U.S. Department of State, Background Note: Philippines.

¹³⁵ BBC Online Network, *Asia-Pacific Trouble Brews on Mischief Reef*, January 22, 1999, accessed at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/260762.stm> on 19 February 2007.

¹³⁶ Justine A. Rosenthal, “Southeast Asia: Archipelago of Afghanistans?,” 489.

U.S. to partner with Asia-Pacific nations, in turn supporting the strategic interests of both nations and enhancing the security environment within the region.

Thailand

Thailand, much like the Philippines, has predominantly been a close partner of the U.S. for the past sixty or so years. The foundation of that strong alliance rests in the now-disbanded Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO), which was originally founded in 1954.¹³⁷ SEATO included a mutual defense treaty for all signatories, outlining that “in the event of armed attack in the treaty area (which includes Thailand), each member would ‘act to meet the common danger in accordance with its constitutional processes.’”¹³⁸ So again there is a foundation upon which closer diplomatic and military ties can be built, and the U.S. has been doing just that with Thailand for several years.

Cobra Gold 2007, scheduled for May 2007, is a “Thailand, United States Co-Sponsored exercise designed to train United States forces operating with Thailand and additional nations (to be determined) in Joint and Multinational operations.”¹³⁹ The 2007 exercise will be the 26th such annual exercise, indicating the strength and longevity of the U.S.-Thai relationship. In the 2006 version of Cobra Gold, U.S. and Thai forces participated in field exercises, but other neighboring nations, such as Singapore, Indonesia, and Japan contributed to the regional exercise efforts via computer simulation

¹³⁷ SEATO was formed under the Southeast Asia Collective Defense Treaty by representatives of Australia, France, Great Britain, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, and the United States. Established under Western auspices after the French withdrawal from Indochina, SEATO was created to oppose further Communist gains in Southeast Asia. It was disbanded in 1977 after proving to be ineffective in achieving unanimous consensus during the Vietnam War.

The Columbia Encyclopedia, Sixth Edition, 2001-2005, Southeast Asia Treaty Organization, accessed at <http://www.bartleby.com/65/st/SthEATO.html> on 19 February 2007.

¹³⁸ U.S. Department of State, Background Note: Thailand, November 2006, U.S.-Thai Relations, accessed at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2814.htm> on 19 February 2007.

¹³⁹ United States Pacific Command, Exercises Directorate, Cobra Gold 2007, accessed from <https://www1.apan-info.net/Default.aspx?alias=www1.apan-info.net/cg07> on 19 February 2007.

and/or humanitarian and civic assistance participation. To further the collaborative regional security efforts, the Thai Government also invited several European and other Asian nations (including China) to participate in various roles. Security cooperation efforts are building a solid foundation of regional partnerships, and fall directly in line with one of U.S. Pacific Command's major focus areas, that is to "advance regional security cooperation and engagement -- work with allies and partners to strengthen relationships, build capacity, and set the conditions for regional security and prosperity."¹⁴⁰

The close ties between the U.S. and Thailand took a significant step backwards in September 2006 when Thailand experienced a bloodless coup, resulting in the overthrow of the democratically elected government of Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra. Following the coup, the U.S. immediately cut off aid, suspending over \$24 million in military cooperation funding.¹⁴¹ This was a short-sighted and strategic miscalculation on the part of the U.S., for it allowed China to step in and provide Thailand with needed aid, and naturally China took advantage of this great opportunity. "China opened a more lively discussion of military matters with Thailand after the coup and the apparent US cut-off. Senior officials from Thailand visited China and China reciprocated. China also offered Thailand \$49 million worth of military aid and training. Now the U.S. has apparently decided that Thailand is not an ally it is willing to lose."¹⁴²

¹⁴⁰ U.S. Pacific Command, "Strategic Foundation, Major Focus Areas," accessed from <http://www.pacom.mil/about/mvp-statements.shtml> on 19 February 2007.

¹⁴¹ Wassana Nanuam, The Bangkok Post, "U.S. Troops Will Take Part in Cobra Gold," accessed from <http://johnib.wordpress.com/tag/cobra-gold/> on 19 February 2007.

¹⁴² John E. Carey, "U.S. Makes Overture to Thailand: We Need You as an Ally, a Democratic Ally," accessed from <http://johnib.wordpress.com/tag/cobra-gold/> on 19 February 2007.

The U.S. has since reversed course on its decision to cut-off military interaction with Thailand and is now planning to participate in Cobra Gold 2007, but at a smaller scale than in previous years. While it is important for the U.S. to encourage and support democratic efforts, it is significantly more important that the U.S. analyze the greater strategic consequences of actions and decisions. The “knee-jerk” reaction to Thailand’s coup may prove to be more harmful to U.S.-Thai relations than any moral high-ground that was gained by severing critical military aid to Thailand. It simply turned Thailand towards a more willing benefactor, and the result was a negative for the U.S. Obviously the U.S. realizes the need for a continued relationship with Thailand and the recent perturbation in U.S.-Thai relations may have been short-lived, but its consequences may carry on for many years. In reality, Thailand’s governmental structure is not nearly as solid as that of the U.S. (or that of other democratic allies in the region), and has a history of bloodless coups, significant corruption issues, continual governmental restructuring, and constitutional revisions.¹⁴³ The 2006 incident is just the latest in a long series, and will undoubtedly not be the last. The U.S. needs allies such as Thailand in the region, and may have to accept some unpleasant realities of the governmental structure of regional allied nations to support the greater good and look after vital U.S. national interests.

In addition to the mutual defense treaty and hopefully renewed military exchanges between the U.S. and Thailand, common interests in combating terrorism also give the U.S. access ability into Thailand. Although not one of the major focus countries identified in the 2005 Congressional Research Service Report, Terrorism in Southeast

¹⁴³ “Country Watch – Country Review, Thailand, Foreign Relations,” accessed at http://www.countrywatch.com/cw_topic.aspx?type=text&vcountry=170&topic=POFOR on 19 February 2007.

Asia, “Al Qaeda and JI [Jemaah Islamiyah Network] groups have used Thailand as a base for holding meetings, setting up escape routes, acquiring arms, and laundering money.”¹⁴⁴

In addition to global terrorist networks using Thailand for their purposes, Muslim extremists also pose a threat to internal domestic stability. Southern Thailand, closer to Malaysia and subject to more spillover of Muslim extremists, has seen an ongoing Islamic insurgency since the mid-1980s. Since 2004, more than 1,300 people have been killed by attacks by carried out by Muslim insurgents operating in the region.¹⁴⁵

Singapore

Singapore, a small city-state critically located along one of the narrowest points of the Strait of Malacca, is a virtual dwarf amongst the much larger and more populous neighboring states of Indonesia and Malaysia. Historically, Singapore has had troublesome relations with both of these “ambitious and antagonistic neighbors.”¹⁴⁶ Singapore gained its independence from the Malaysian Federation in 1965 and since then has had to “fend for itself” in terms of security needs. Hence Singapore has “produced a military sufficient to not only deter potential adversaries, but also defend itself and its interests in the region.”¹⁴⁷ Mindful of its precarious security situation, Singapore has taken great steps to improve the capability of its armed forces, with the United States and Europe as the main suppliers of Singapore’s new military resources. Diesel submarines, F-16C/D fighter aircraft, air-refueling tankers, and E-2C early warning aircraft are part of

¹⁴⁴ Bruce Vaughn, *CRS Report for Congress: Terrorism in Southeast Asia*, updated 7 February 2005, accessed at <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/terror/RL31672.pdf> on 19 November 2006, 27.

¹⁴⁵ U.S. Department of State, “Background Note: Thailand, November 2006, U.S.-Thai Relations,” accessed at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2814.htm> on 19 February 2007.

¹⁴⁶ Felix K. Chang, “In Defense of Singapore,” *Orbis*, Vol 47 (No. 1), Winter 2003, 108.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 107.

the makeup of Singapore's capable military, and "it is the only regional armed force with a serious commitment to RMA...[designating] the Singapore Air Force as the best equipped and trained armed force in Southeast Asia."¹⁴⁸

Just like Indonesia and Malaysia, Singapore has had to deal with the problem of Islamic militants, many with links to JI or AQ. In late 2001, and again in 2002, Singapore officials arrested large groups of Islamic militants, whose presence is viewed as "antithetical to the island's authorities, who believe domestic unity to be a cornerstone of national security."¹⁴⁹ These actions have served to draw Singapore and the U.S. into an even closer relationship, building upon the already strong foundations of economic, diplomatic, and military interaction. The U.S. and Singapore now are close partners in intelligence sharing, and Singapore was a founding member of the U.S.-led Proliferation Security Initiative (PSI), a program intended to interdict the shipment of WMD.¹⁵⁰ Yet another strong bond between the U.S. and Singapore is the Free Trade Agreement (FTA) created in 2003, the first of its kind between the U.S. and an Asian nation.¹⁵¹

The cornerstone of the bond between Singapore and the U.S. is the "Strategic Framework Agreement" signed in 2005, which states "A defense and security cooperation partnership between the United States and Singapore is of benefit to both nations and to the region."¹⁵² In this agreement, both nations agree to cooperate on defense issues, conduct bilateral training exercises, collectively counter global terrorism,

¹⁴⁸ Sheldon W. Simon, *Strategic Asia* 2005-06, 287.

¹⁴⁹ Felix K. Chang, "In Defense of Singapore," 122.

¹⁵⁰ Bruce Vaughn, "CRS Report for Congress: Terrorism in Southeast Asia," 31.

¹⁵¹ "Country Watch – Singapore: Political Conditions," accessed at http://www.countrywatch.com/cw_topic.aspx?type=text&vcountry=154&topic=POPCO on 21 February 2007.

¹⁵² Strategic Framework Agreement between the United States of America and the Republic of Singapore for a Closer Cooperation Partnership in Defense and Security, July 12, 2005, accessed at <http://209.85.165.104/search?q=cache:txSXfnaH53oJ:se2.isn.ch/serviceengine/FileContent%3FserviceID%3D23%26fileid%3DD147CAFD-9C40-FB05-2DEF-ED4873138430%26lng%3Den+us+-+singapore+strategic+agreement&hl=en&ct=clnk&cd=3&gl=us> on 5 March 2007, 1.

and Singapore agrees to provide facilities for U.S. military vessels and equipment passing through Southeast Asia.

Singapore does maintain and benefit from close economic ties with China. In 2004, Singapore was China's largest trading partner among the ASEAN countries, and China's seventh largest globally, with bilateral trade exceeding \$53 billion.¹⁵³ China, an autocratic government, and Singapore, a western-oriented democracy, maintain different opinions on many issues, and Singapore definitely leans towards the western influence that has brought it economic success. But according to Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong, "Singapore wishes China well in its pursuit of peaceful and sustainable development. We see such a China as a boon to us and to the region."¹⁵⁴

Singapore will continue to be a strong regional ally for the U.S., one that represents the benefits of democracy and capitalism to other nations in Southeast Asia. It is a capable partner in dealing with local security issues, to include piracy and regional terrorism activities. And although Singapore does not necessarily have strategic impact upon China, its close alliance with both the U.S. and China will allow it to serve as a stabilizing regional power.

Southeast Asia Takeaways

To conclude the section on Southeast Asia, a summary of the major obstacles opposing U.S. interests is appropriate. Justine Rosenthal, in her article "Archipelago of Afghanistans," identified four such obstacles and, while these deal primarily with the war on terrorism, they point directly to how the U.S. needs to operate with regional nations in

¹⁵³ China Daily, 9 August 2005, accessed at http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/english/doc/2005-08/09/content_467408.htm on 21 February 2007.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid.

the broader context of regional security: (1) bilateralism vs. multilateralism, (2) anti-Americanism, (3) sleeping with the enemy, and (4) the trump card.¹⁵⁵

Bilateralism vs. Multilateralism: Most of the multilateral institutions (e.g. ASEAN) in Southeast Asia are ineffective due to regional rivalries and conflicting security concerns. “Countries prefer to cooperate bilaterally...and thus it is difficult to develop a functioning coalition.”¹⁵⁶ This results in reduced effectiveness in U.S. efforts, not just in combating terrorism, but in preventing China from piecemeal exploitation and coercion of individual states in the region. To prevent this, the U.S. needs to use economic, diplomatic, and military engagement to strengthen U.S. and intra-Asian ties.

Anti-Americanism: A strong U.S. presence has challenged the sovereignty and security perceptions of many Southeast Asian nations. If this attitude becomes too prevalent, it could greatly jeopardize U.S. efforts to foster peace and stability, particularly in countries that are not major U.S. allies (e.g., Indonesia).

Sleeping with the Enemy: The war on terror, as well as efforts to balance China’s growth of influence, will force the U.S. to integrate and operate with unsavory regimes. It may need to overlook or accept domestic political choices by those governments that are contrary to U.S. philosophy. The U.S. reaction to the recent coup in Thailand is a poignant example of how not to handle this situation.

The Trump Card: Regional states may choose to deviate from U.S. efforts to support their own domestic or geopolitical interests and constraints. While the U.S. only has marginal ability to influence these instances, it needs to understand and recognize a partner’s limitations, and willingly accept any contributions they can offer.

¹⁵⁵ Justine A. Rosenthal, “Southeast Asia: Archipelago of Afghanistans?,” 480-483.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 480-481.

Australia

“Australia is America’s oldest friend and ally in the Asia-Pacific region and second closest ally in the world.”¹⁵⁷

Paul Dobb

The U.S.-Australia alliance, formalized as part of the Australia-New Zealand-United States (ANZUS) Security treaty signed in 1951, has roots stretching back much earlier.¹⁵⁸ U.S. and Australian soldiers fought side by side in World War I and World War II, and did so again during the Korean and Vietnam Wars as well as Desert Storm. In the days following the September 11th attacks, Australian Prime Minister John Howard invoked the ANZUS treaty for the first time in the history of the treaty. Australia, despite having a very small but capable Australian Defense Force (ADF), was one of the first nations to deploy to Afghanistan for Operation Enduring Freedom, and today maintains military and civilian presence in Iraq and Afghanistan in support of NATO and U.S. efforts.¹⁵⁹ From Australia’s perspective, close ties with the U.S. are essential to its long-term security and will continue to promote stability within the region. “Australia's ANZUS alliance with the United States is fundamental to our national security. The ANZUS commitment to consult and act against a common threat is directly relevant to the defence of Australia. And as a pillar of US engagement in Asia, the alliance strengthens the stability of our region.”¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁷ Paul Dobb, “U.S.-Australia Alliance Relations: An Australian View,” *Strategic Forum*, No 216, August 2005, Institute for National Strategic Studies, National Defense University, 1.

¹⁵⁸ In 1986, the U.S. suspended its treaty security obligations to New Zealand after New Zealand refused access to its ports by nuclear-weapons-capable and nuclear-powered ships of the U.S. Navy. Australia and the U.S. both remain committed to the conditions of the ANZUS security treaty.

U.S. Department of State, “Background Note: Australia, August 2006, U.S.-Australian Relations,” accessed at <http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/2698.htm> on 20 February 2007.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Alexander Downer, Australian Prime Minister for Foreign Affairs, *Australia’s Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper*, 12 February 2003, Chapter Six: Strengthening our Alliance with the United States, accessed at http://www.dfat.gov.au/ani/chapter_6.html on 20 February 2007.

Despite its very close ties with the U.S. on security issues and its desire to see the U.S. stay actively engaged in the Pacific, Australia has in recent years looked to China as a strategic economic partner. This growing relationship could present a challenging diplomatic and perhaps military situation if the U.S. does not appreciate and understand the complex and dynamic relationship that is unfolding. To highlight the growing Sino-Australian relations, consider the following facts: Australian copper, zinc, uranium and iron ore mines are all exported to China, Australia's trade with China has tripled in the past decade, and recently Australia initiated a \$25 billion contract to supply China with liquid natural gas.¹⁶¹ On the geopolitical front, Australia also broke from the U.S. when they "declined to follow the Bush Administration's lead and publicly press Europe not to lift a weapons embargo of China."¹⁶² Furthermore, Australia has also created concern in Washington, suggesting that a U.S.-China confrontation over Taiwan would "fall outside the scope of the U.S.-Australian alliance," and Australian military support in such a situation "was by no means a matter of course."¹⁶³

But despite the apparent diverging interests between Australia and the U.S. with regards to China, both nations agree that relations between them are as strong as ever. According to Michael Green, former Special Assistant to President Bush and Senior Director for Asian Affairs, "global security interests tie the United States and Australia

¹⁶¹ Tim Johnson, "Australia, a Longtime U.S. Ally, Drifting Towards New Suitor China," January 17, 2007, accessed at http://web.lexis-nexis.com/universe/document?_m=3bf565b0dbe88306c5f069cab586a127&_docnum=9&wchp=dGLbVzz-zSkVA&_md5=bf310de0dea447c05ac6c94bdd18a483 on 20 February 2007, 2

¹⁶² Ibid., 2

¹⁶³ Hugh White, *Strategic Asia 2005-06: Military Modernization in an Era of Uncertainty* (Washington D.C., National Bureau of Asian Research, 2005), 325-326.

together....and the soaring Sino-Australian trade relationship doesn't automatically threaten that.”¹⁶⁴

Despite governmental messages that suggest the strength of the U.S.-Australian alliance is still on solid ground, the U.S. needs to clearly understand Australia does not view China as posing a regional hegemonic threat, at least not with the same veracity as the U.S. It is unlikely that Australia will take a strong vocal position on confrontational issues regarding China, just like they did not regarding the EU weapons embargo.

Australia, first and foremost, will consider its vital national interests, and in situations such as Taiwan, will probably opt out of military involvement. Instead, Australia sees its contributory role as one of integrated partner in the U.S.-Sino relationship. Mr. Downer emphasizes Australia's contribution stating, “Australia has an enormous stake and a helpful role to play in the management by the United States of its relationships within the region, including its complex relationship with China.”¹⁶⁵

The U.S. must understand and appreciate that Australia provides a critical regional security capability that has global benefit. Australia has contributed greatly to efforts to stabilize and support weak and failing states in the South Pacific and Southeast Asia, many of which are breeding grounds for terrorist groups. Additionally, with the U.S. focused heavily in the Middle East, Australia has stepped up and taken a leadership role in confronting security issues in Southeast Asia and the South Pacific. In the fields of counterterrorism, intelligence, military, and police force training, Australia has a very robust relationship with Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, and

¹⁶⁴ Tim Johnson, “*Australia, a Longtime U.S. Ally, Drifting Towards New Suitor China*,” 2

¹⁶⁵ Alexander Downer, *Australia's Foreign and Trade Policy White Paper*.

the nations of the South Pacific.¹⁶⁶ Its consistent focus on combating regional terrorism is a critical capability Australia brings to enabling regional security, and the U.S. needs to foster and support its efforts. Both directly and indirectly through Australia's efforts, the U.S. can work towards its objective of peace and stability in Southeast Asia.

India

*"The United States is serious about its vision for the U.S.-India relationship and we are working hard with our Indian counterparts to make it happen."*¹⁶⁷

- Condoleezza Rice

Since India gained its independence from Great Britain in 1947, it has had a rocky relationship with the U.S., mostly due to India's close relationship with the Soviet Union during the Cold War, and the close U.S. relationship with Pakistan. But times have changed, and today the U.S. and India are reaping the benefits of India's fantastic economic growth, and their positions as the world's two largest democracies. In March 2006, President Bush and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh "expressed satisfaction with the great progress...in advancing our strategic partnership to meet the global challenges of the 21st century."¹⁶⁸ The link between the U.S. and India, as cited by their leaders, is a "deep commitment to freedom and democracy; a celebration of national diversity, human creativity and innovation; a quest to expand prosperity and economic opportunity worldwide; and a desire to increase mutual security..."¹⁶⁹

India's proximity to major areas of concern for the U.S. is a primary reason for the elevation of India's status to a strategic partner, and its economic capabilities also

¹⁶⁶ Paul Dibb, "U.S.-Australia Alliance Relations: An Australian View," 4.

¹⁶⁷ Condoleezza Rice, *Reaching New Heights: U.S.-India Relations in the 21st Century*, accessed at <http://newdelhi.usembassy.gov/uploads/images/jjDVelFXR3rAB0Of5Ke7dg/reach.pdf> on 21 February 2007.

¹⁶⁸ George W. Bush and Manmohan Singh, in a U.S.-India Joint Statement, 2 March 2006, accessed at <http://usinfo.state.gov/sa/Archive/2006/Mar/02-863230.html> on 21 February 2007.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid.

support that rise. “We see India as the essential engine of economic progress and democracy that enhances stable development from the Middle East to the Far East,”¹⁷⁰ says Richard Boucher, U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs. In terms of geographic significance, India shares large border areas with both China and Pakistan, and also sits near the western entrance to the Strait of Malacca.

India’s relationship with China has been fair to moderate in recent years, with its strength existing in bilateral economic trade. Border disputes in the Tibet and Sikkim areas (Northeast India) have been a source of friction between the two nations, as have concerns of both nations about nuclear proliferation. In 1998, India conducted nuclear tests, citing a primary reason as the “potential threats from China.”¹⁷¹ So although the bonds between China and India are growing, they are not at a point where they will declare each other strategic partners, as the U.S. and India have done recently.

Mr. Boucher presents a rebuttal to the oft-mentioned claim that any strengthening of ties with India is only meant to counterbalance China. He states, “I reject this kind of zero-sum thinking as too simplistic. Good relations with India do not come at the expense of good relations with China.”¹⁷² As with other parts of the Asia-Pacific region, the U.S. needs to downplay the counterbalance argument in its efforts to strengthen ties with regional nations. Recalling again that most nations prefer the simplicity of bilateral agreements, particularly in Southeast Asia, the zero-sum gain

¹⁷⁰ Richard A. Boucher, in a speech before the Confederation of Indian Industries, April 7, 2006, accessed at <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb?index=4&did=1017803101&SrchMode=1&sid=4&Fmt=3&VInst=PROD&VType=PQD&RQT=309&VName=PQD&TS=1172097687&clientId=3921> on 21 February 2007.

¹⁷¹ “Country Watch – India: Foreign Relations,” accessed at http://www.countrywatch.com/cw_topic.aspx?type=text&vcountry=78&topic=POFOR on 21 February 2007.

¹⁷² Richard A. Boucher, speech before the Confederation of Indian Industries.

thought process could easily derail U.S. efforts to promote and encourage all nations to contribute to regional and global security.

One final area to discuss with regards to India is its involvement and interaction with combating terrorism, and how U.S. relations with Pakistan in that endeavor have strained U.S.-India relations. Clearly the U.S. needs Pakistan and President Musharraf's support to continue to combat the Taliban and Al Qaeda in Afghanistan. However, the strained, and sometimes combative, relationship between India and Pakistan and its territorial disputes in the Kashmir and Jammu regions truly complicate this effort. As a poignant example, the recent U.S. sale of F-16 fighters to Pakistan, ostensibly in compensation for Pakistan's support in the war on terrorism, was a setback to U.S.-India relations. Shortly thereafter, President Bush visited India, and when he and Prime Minister Manmohan Singh signed a nuclear accord, India gained access to civil nuclear technology from the U.S.¹⁷³ India is, and will continue to be, a major U.S. ally and strategic partner, supporting the U.S. in the war on terrorism, fostering democracy and economic growth in Southeast Asia, and standing as a large, democratic ally in South Asia.

Recommendations

*"Using the American armed forces as the world's '911' will degrade capabilities, bog soldiers down in peacekeeping roles, and fuel concern among other great powers that the United States has decided to enforce notions of 'limited sovereignty' worldwide in the name of humanitarianism."*¹⁷⁴

- Condoleezza Rice

For the next one to two decades, the U.S. will continue to be the world's leading superpower, but that role is changing as the world becomes more globalized and less

¹⁷³ Country Watch – India: Foreign Relations,

¹⁷⁴ Antonia Felix, *Condi: the Condoleezza Rice Story* (New York: Newmarket Press, 2005), 197.

affected solely by the actions and interactions of nation-states. While the U.S. may still be the strongest nation in the world, especially militarily and economically, its power relative to other nations is diminishing. The U.S. influence is waning, and, as Robert Samuelson suggests, factors that are eroding U.S. power include China's rise, nuclear proliferation, U.S. domestic requirements such as Social Security and Medicare that impact military spending, and allies that are drifting away from the U.S. in the absence of a Cold War Soviet threat.¹⁷⁵

In concert with a slow decline in the U.S. ability to unilaterally control and influence the geopolitical arena, China will continue to rise, gaining more dominance and influence over the world economic market, and generally pursuing its vital national interests with a global campaign. This is an inevitable fact supported by China's current position, but what is not rigid is the nature and manner in which China manifests those ambitions. In this arena the rest of the world does have a vote and can influence China's development, but to do so they must realize the opportunity before them. Nations, IGOs, and NGOs alike need to think about the strategic effects they would prefer with regards to China and develop a comprehensive roadmap that will enable those effects.

For the United States, several key efforts could be undertaken to foster and support the sought-after peace and security in the Asia-Pacific region. These are not meant to obviate the concepts of assure, dissuade, deter, and defeat presented in the 2005 National Defense Strategy.¹⁷⁶ Rather they serve to complement the methods outlined in

¹⁷⁵ Robert J. Samuelson, "Farewell to Pax Americana," 14 December, 2006, accessed at http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2006/12/13/AR2006121301907_pf.html on 14 December 2006.

¹⁷⁶ United States Department of Defense, *National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*, March 2005, Office of the Secretary of Defense.

the National Defense Strategy as well as those spelled out in the nested U.S. Government strategies and U.S. policy.

First, the U.S. must be willing to accept some short-term challenges and perhaps setbacks to reap the long-term results. A poignant example already mentioned is the degradation in U.S.-Thai relations that resulted from the U.S. cutting off military aide after the peaceful government coup that occurred in 2006. While it may have been hard to justify diplomatically and perhaps domestically to continue to provide military aid, any short-term gains from that decision were severely trumped by the closer relations forged between China and Thailand. Allies and partners in the Asia-Pacific region are absolutely critical to U.S. vital interests, and although most of them may not reflect the Jeffersonian democracy of the U.S., their variances in governmental operations and functions must be understood as part of their culture.

Second, and tied to the first recommendation, is for the U.S. to realize that nations are going to act in their own vital national interests and these interests may at best loosely align with those of the United States. Here the U.S. needs to consider the strategic goals and objectives of allied and partner nations, and work to find common ground upon which to enhance the relationship. Certainly there will be differences and disagreements, but it is the common purpose, in this case stability and security in the Asia-Pacific region, that will enable the U.S. and others to forge stronger relationships and engender that sought-after peace and stability.

Third, after understanding that nations will act in their own (perhaps viewed by others as selfish) interests, the U.S. needs to examine the perspective of those nations and understand why they espouse that philosophy or belief. All too often, the U.S. jumps to

the conclusion that other nations think like it does, and this routinely turns out to be a false assumption that has led to a misaligned policy or action. By viewing the environment through the perspective of its allies and partners, the U.S. will be better positioned to frame an engagement strategy that will draw nations together. This engagement strategy will be able to link or align that nation's philosophy with its own vital interests, and provide a means to foster mutual understanding of how a stable security arrangement will serve every nation's vital interests.

Fourth, the notion of realism contends that nations will make rational, objective decisions based upon the survival of their nation. Contrast this with idealism, where people (or nations) are "motivated by morality issues and ideologies"¹⁷⁷ such as democracy, freedom of speech, human rights, and the like. The U.S. for the most part stands in the latter, although there are instances where the U.S. chooses a course of action based solely upon supporting vital national interests instead of pursuing idealism (e.g., lack of involvement in Darfur). For the most part, President Bush adheres to the idealistic visions prevalent in his policy statements and documents, such as the National Security Strategy. However, not all nations are postured and willing to nurture idealism above realism, and do not necessarily view ideas such as liberal democracy, and its associated liberties, as the perfect and desired form of government. The U.S. needs to understand and appreciate that sentiment and accept the difference in ideology that many key allies and partners in the region support.

Fifth, the U.S. needs to be willing to accept some risk in terms of military force modernization and growth. The Defense Budget will never support the growing demands of the military branches to counter and oppose all possible threats. From China as a near-

¹⁷⁷ Antonia Felix, *Condi: the Condoleezza Rice Story*, 94.

peer competitor, to rogue states and non-state actors with WMD, to terrorists waging asymmetric warfare, and more, the list of capabilities needed to effectively combat all of these threats is unaffordable. The U.S. Government will need to make some tough choices, using strategic risk analysis, to determine where it is willing to allow gaps in a comprehensive security program. As discussed in detail in my previous chapter, this is where the concept of burden-sharing with Asia-Pacific allies and partners can be most effective. The U.S. needs to use economic and diplomatic methods to convince Asia-Pacific nations to increase their contributions to regional security, in particular Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea.

Sixth, the U.S. needs to recognize the inherent sovereignty of each of the nations of the region. They are autonomous, self-supporting nations that are aligned with the U.S. only because it serves their best interests. As presented in the section on South Korea, many South Koreans are resentful of a U.S. military presence in South Korea and perhaps perceive their country as a “puppet” of the United States. As the U.S. influence globally begins to wane, the ability of the U.S. to leverage these nations has too diminished. The U.S. needs to find alternate routes to foster and support these allies, and by enhancing their impressions of their own national sovereignty, supported by the U.S. as desired, they will hopefully continue to align themselves with the U.S. The alternative is to unintentionally push allied nations away from the U.S. by instituting an assumed right to influence a sovereign nation’s actions, and that may be a costly mistake the U.S. is not aware it has made until it is too late.

Inherent to all of these recommendations is the concept that diplomacy outranks, and is more effective than, all other instruments of national power. In other words, the

U.S. needs to be more willing to conduct talks and dialogue. Recent success in the Six-Party Talks suggests the potential of this effort, and now the U.S. is pursuing bilateral talks with North Korea. At a minimum, by conducting such talks and dialogue with allies, partners, and even potential adversaries, the U.S. will be able to gain a better understanding and appreciation of their perspectives. Once the U.S. gains this understanding of all of the key contributors to security and stability in the Asia-Pacific region then it will be able to fully develop a coherent and comprehensive strategy. The end result will be a structure that brings together all of the nations in the region, including China, to promote and produce an environment marked with regional security and stability.

CONCLUSION

The global environment has changed since the end of the Cold War in 1990, and the U.S. is no longer the dominant superpower it once was. China has emerged on the global scene as a rising “near-peer” competitor. The end of the bipolar environment has had a drastic impact upon the nature of strategic alliances, and for the U.S. the result has been troubling. The closest of U.S. allies are still with them, but only in the capacity in which it serves their own vital interests. In many cases, the nature of the environment has driven many allies away from the U.S. and unfortunately the U.S. has been slow or unwilling to adapt to the new environment. If the U.S. fails to realize and adapt its strategy towards dealing with global allies, it will continue to see its global influence wane, as other nations rise to fill the vacuum. China certainly is one of those emerging nations, and with each misstep committed by the U.S., China gains more power and influence, mainly in the Asia-Pacific region, but also within a global context.

China’s military will continue to grow as it has been doing for the past ten years, and the true nature and intent behind that growth will remain uncertain. China has many domestic issues that it is struggling to handle and is using nationalism as a rallying force to unite the populace and also to divert attention away from some of the more significant domestic concerns facing the nation. Despite the explanations from the Chinese Government and the speculations from the international community as to the true purpose of its military growth, China has or soon will achieve military dominance over individual nations in the region. With the nature of China’s Communist Government, its bellicose philosophy towards Taiwan, and oft-expressed concern by regional nations about China

as a growing threat, stability and security in the region is at stake unless all the regional nations (including the U.S.) collectively strive to shape China's growth.

The U.S. needs to support its Asia-Pacific regional allies and partners in every possible manner, and do so with the combined efforts of all of the elements of national power. Certainly military support increases each nation's ability to safeguard its sovereignty against both internal and external threats, and also provide support to regional stability and security. Equally important and linked to military support are the economic capabilities the U.S. brings to regional nations, for these can enhance a nation's inherent stability and promote the aim of self-supporting and economically viable nations. To affect both the military and economic interaction just described, diplomacy must be the forerunner. The U.S. needs to continue and, perhaps in certain cases, initiate engaging and cooperative dialogue with all of the nations in the region. This is especially critical with troublesome nations, such as North Korea. Furthermore, it would behoove the U.S. to do so in both a bilateral and a multilateral construct, for both bring about positive benefits in international diplomacy.

The Asia-Pacific region, stretching from Japan in the Northeast, to Australia in the Southeast, to the eastern Indian Ocean, to the area of Central Asia, is a vast expanse of the earth. Its population is extremely large, very diverse, and runs the gamut of social, economic, religious, and governmental constructs. There is no one strategy that the U.S. can devise that will work uniformly across all of the nations in the region, but the broad concepts presented in this paper will enable the U.S. to foster and engender stability and security in the region. China already has significant influence throughout the region, and in some circumstances its interests are at odds with the U.S., while in others the interests

of both nations are aligned. By partnering with regional nations, with focus on the combined capabilities of diplomatic, economic, and military resources, the U.S. and its partners and allies will be able to provide the necessary strength to counter China's growing influence, and simultaneously enable regional stability and security.

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ACRONYMS

ADC	Air Defense Command
ADF	Australian Defense Force
ANZUS	Australia-New Zealand-United States
AQ	Al-Qaeda
ASEAN	Association of South-East Asian Nations
AWACS	Airborne Warning and Control System
BJOCC	Bilateral Joint Operations Coordination Center
CCP	Chinese Communist Party
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone
DPP	Democratic Progressive Party
DPRK	Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea)
EMP	Electro-magnetic Pulse
EU	European Union
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IDF	Indigenous Defense Fighter
JI	Jemaah Islamiyah
LY	Legislative Yuan
MCAS	Marine Corps Air Station
MOD	Ministry of Defense
OEF	Operation Enduring Freedom
OIF	Operation Iraqi Freedom
OPCON	Operational Control
PLA	People's Liberation Army (China)
PLAAF	People's Liberation Army Air Forces (China)
PLAN	People's Liberation Army Navy (China)
PRC	People's Republic of China
PSI	Proliferation Security Initiative
RMA	Revolution in Military Affairs
RMSI	Regional Maritime Security Initiative
ROC	Republic of China (Taiwan)
ROCAF	Republic of China Air Force
ROK	Republic of Korea (South Korea)
SDF	Self-Defense Force
SEATO	Southeast Asia Treaty Organization
UN	United Nations
UNC	United Nations Command
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
UNSCR	United Nations Security Council Resolution
WMD	Weapons of Mass Destruction

VITA

Major Christopher Bennett attended the United States Air Force Academy, graduating with military honors in 1993, and earning a Bachelor of Science Degree in Mathematical Sciences. He attended Pilot Training at Vance Air Force Base, Oklahoma, earning his pilot wings in November 1994. He completed his first operational tour, flying the KC-135 Stratotanker at Grand Forks Air Force Base, North Dakota, upgrading to Instructor Pilot. In 2000, he was competitively selected for Air Mobility Command's PHOENIX HAWK Intern program, and served in both the Tanker Airlift Control Center and the Plans and Programs Directorate. While assigned to Air Mobility Command, he completed his Master's Degree in Computer Resources and Information Management from Webster University. He was selected for crossflow to the C-130 Hercules, and following initial training, moved to Elmendorf Air Force Bases, Alaska. While assigned to Alaska, he served as a Squadron Assistant Director of Operations, Squadron Chief of Staff, and Operations Group Executive Officer. He is currently attending the Joint Advanced Warfighting School in Norfolk, Virginia, completing a Master's Degree in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy. He is a Senior Pilot, with almost 3,000 flight hours and 400 combat and combat support hours.

He is married to the former Molly McCormick, and they have three children, Kaitlin (9), Elijah (4), and Emma (2). Kaitlin and Elijah are their biological children, and Emma was adopted from the Anhui province of China in May of 2005.